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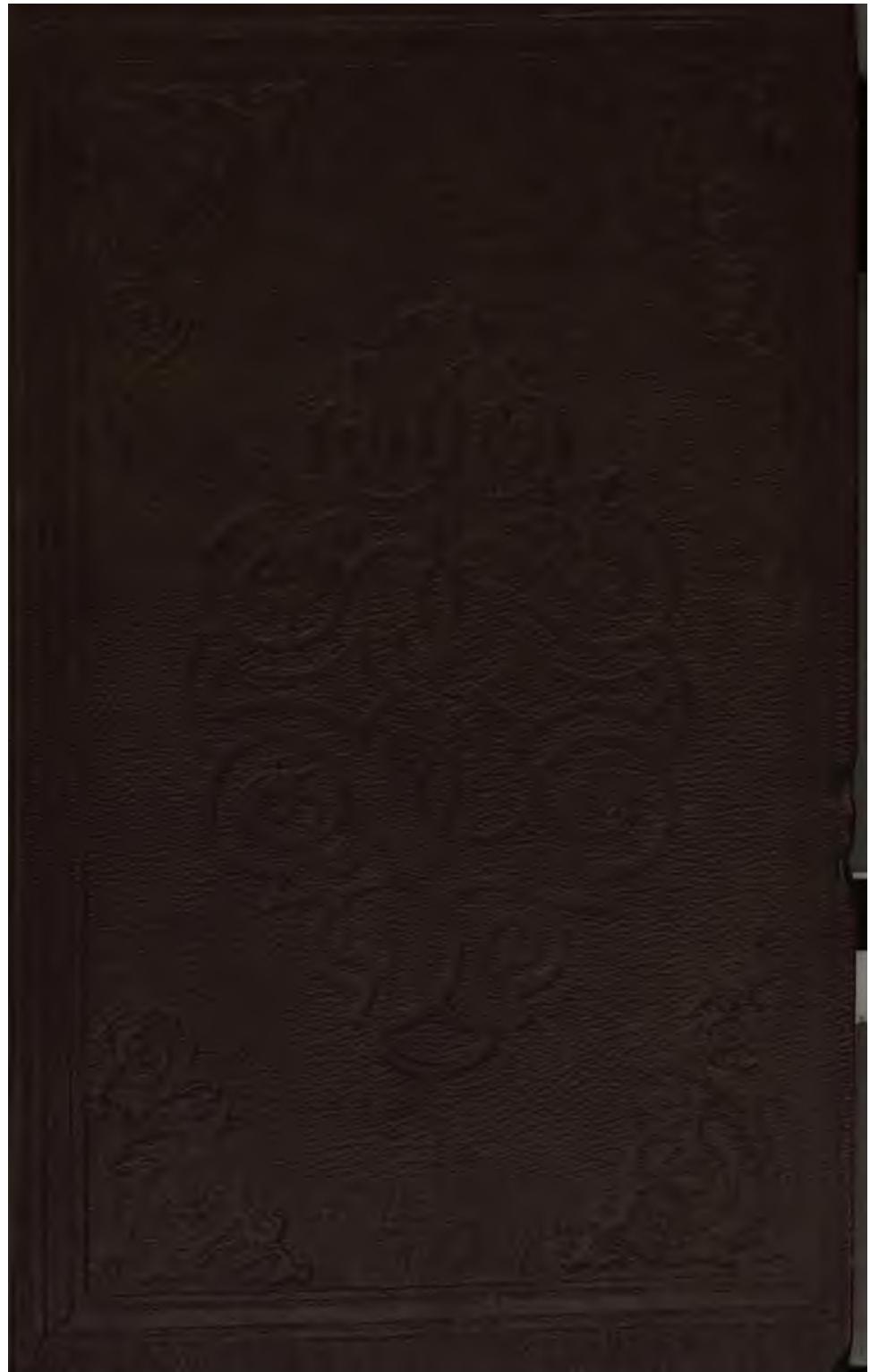
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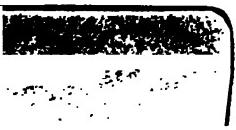
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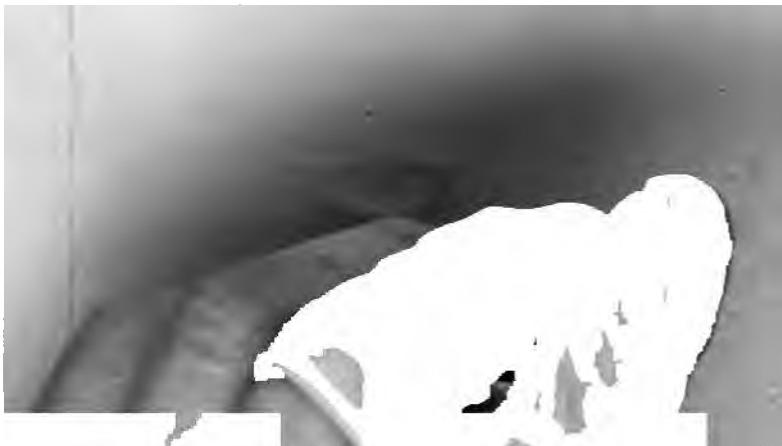




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THE BREACH OF PROMISE.



THE
B R E A C H O F P R O M I S E.

A N O V E L.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

BY THE AUTHOR OF
"THE JILT;" "COUSIN GEOFFERY;" "THE MARRYING MAN;"
"THE MATCHMAKER;" &c., &c.

VOL. II.

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THE BREACH OF PROMISE.

CHAPTER I.

THE carriage which conveyed Lucilla and her friend to the house of the young artist, was in the quiet, but good taste, which distinguished all Miss Trueblue's appointments. No wretched, wearied, rat-like horses, dragged some gaudy, new-fangled equipage ; the coachman's and footman's rich livery did not form a curious contrast with their jaded, wretched looks.

A dark-green chariot, admirably built, with every modern improvement, the quiet crest of the Trueblue family (bees and a hive), emblems of Industry and Forethought, a pair

of beautiful, sleek, well fed, happy-looking horses, a fat merry-looking coachman, and a smart, ruddy youth, his son, dressed in quiet liveries of sober brown—these formed the turn-out of Mr. Trueblue, a man who could have bought up half the dashing equipages that shone very often only as “comets of a season.”

As Lucilla, to whom a carriage was sufficiently a novelty to be a source of exquisite delight, after leaning back for a moment, to enjoy the swelling cushions of green morocco, looked through the open window, she saw standing under the porch of the hotel next the Trueblues a party of fashionable young men laughing and talking; one towered above the rest, and Lucilla, catching Miss Trueblue’s arm, said, almost with horror—“There he is—there he is! and pointing us out.”

As she spoke, Lord Trelawney bowed with courtly grace; and an instinct of politeness compelled Lucilla to bend her head in return.

“ He claims you as an acquaintance, my dear, Lucilla! Oh, be on your guard, my girl! the men around him are all sporting men, more or less notorious, lawless, and desperate. There was a snake-like glitter in his eyes as he recognised you, which I did not like. I fear he has marked you for his persecution, if not his prey—be on your guard, I implore you. And now for the young Italian artist, likewise a dangerous acquaintance, at least for most young girls, only I have heard my Lucilla so often declare her dislike to foreigners, and her contempt for those English girls, who disdained respectable Englishmen, but ran wild after guitars, moustachios, and *bon-bons*, and to whose ears Don Mein Herr, Monsieur Le Comte, and Il Signor Marchese, were a music as preferable to plain Mr. so-and-so, as are Bellini’s airs to our country dances.”

It was at a large, but very dilapidated-looking house in Howland Street, Fitzroy Square,

that Miss Trueblue's carriage stopped. An old woman, in pattens, who had evidently been scrubbing the hall, for a pail and a brush were beside her, opened the door. A rusty, old, black bonnet, was tilted over her bottle nose ; she was a regular London char-woman. Her skinny arms, her hands puckered with recent soap-suds, her tucked up skirts, her coarse wet apron, tied behind, her black worsted legs, her snuff, her deafness, all betrayed her profession.

It was a long time, before she could be made to understand what was wanted of her.

At length, by bawling in her ear, the footman made her aware that the inquiry was after an artist lodging in the house.

“ What, a French forinner ? ” growled the old woman (the lower orders consider all foreigners French); “ one as draws picturs—yes, he've took the fust floor, but I don't *do* for him—don't know nothing about 'un,” and she was about to close the door.

" Give her a shilling, James, and ask her to see if he is in," said Miss Trueblue.

This being done, the old woman's whole tone and manner altered ; she smiled, curtsied, slipped off her pattens, untied her apron, removed her pail and scrubbing brush, and having miraculously recovered her sense of hearing, she said in a cheerful voice—" I gives you many thanks, my lady—for a raal lady you is, and that's more than I can say of all as looks it; there's carriage folks, with their watches to their sides, would have the door opened for 'em to everlastin', without giving a poor old body a sixpence for her trouble."

" Will you ask if the gentleman is at home?" said Miss Trueblue.

" Yes, that I will my lady! leastways, I knows he is; just let me lay down a mat for your blessed feet! I'll have many a good cup o' tea, to comfort my old heart out of this here blessed shillun. I'm a lone ooman—I've

brought up twelve, and now there ain't one of 'em to help me in the leastest."

" But how is that?" asked Miss Trueblue ; " are they all alive?"

" No, my lady, there ain't but three of 'em left—one is in the hospital, poor soul ; and t'other, a daater with three children, in the workus ! I'm thankful to say, nine of 'em the Lord have tooked ; they're better provided for than they'd be here, starving in a Union, on water grool ; I prayed to have 'em tooked, and they was tooked ; and I was enabled to have 'em all buried decent, for which I'm thankful. Yes, they're better off than poor Job in the hospital, and poor Ruth in the Union, a parted from her husband, whom the silly cretur married for love, and who've lost the use of his limbs."

" Poor, poor creature !" said Miss Trueblue, her eyes filling with tears ; " may she not be with him, then ?"

" No, not she ! she bore up for his sake, and tooked in washing, and waited on him as

if he'd been a babe; but in her last confinement she caught a cold, along of getting to the wash tub too soon, she was so afeard he'd have to go to the workus. Well, she catched a cold, had a bad breast—was laid up, and now there they are a parted, though under the same roof, and both dying broken-hearted, I believes. Well, them two can't help me, miss."

" And the third—can he do nothing?"

" Lor love ye, no! it can't be expected; he was always silly, and now he's downright mazed, and the parish have took him to Bedlam. Many's the time I've begged on my bended knees to Providence to take him, and leave me one as could help me in my old age; but Lor, 'tain't no use. I little thought I'd rared twelve of 'em to come to this—three shillun a week, that's all I earns, and find myself. Wait a bit; I'll go up and tell the fo-rinner. Oh, my old bones, how I aches, to be sure!"

So saying, she went up stairs (pretty nimbly), moaning to herself the while. Presently, a hurried step was heard, and Di Moricini himself came eagerly down to receive his visitors, and usher them up stairs.

Though sadly out of repair, the drawing-rooms on the first floor were handsome and spacious, and had considerable remains of elegance about them.

The light excluded below, came in from above, with that soft and magical effect peculiar to a painter's studio. Some curious old chairs, and couches, antique and picturesque tables, pictures, some framed and finished, some in progress only, were placed round the rooms; casts of celebrated statues gleamed in the dark corners, with pieces of armour, vases, and ancient mantles, and other garments of velvet and fur; a piano, a guitar, books, and several beautiful plants, completed this interesting *atelier*.

How much more charming to Lucilla was

this room, with its chastened light, its quaint furniture, and its triumphs of Genius—than the gaudy drawing-rooms of wealth, all so exactly alike, all fitted up by some tasteless upholsterer, only anxious, by overwhelming with monotonous and ill-chosen ornament, to surcharge both the employer, and his apartments.

And there stood the interesting young painter; a tasteful *blouse* of foreign silk, of dark blue, forming, with a crimson velvet Apollo cap, which covered his clustering, auburn hair, a poetical and picturesque costume—and thus attired, with his palette in his hand, his oval face, waving hair, and expression at once soft and bright, he strongly reminded Lucilla, of Raphael, in the well-known picture that represents him with the Fornarina hanging over her inspired lover, as he immortalizes the Italian beauty of her haunting face. Lucilla, too, as, at Miss True-blue's request, she took off her bonnet and sank into a chair of the time of Francois Pre-

mier, added not a little to the effect of this picturesque retreat. Somewhat pale with a thousand new emotions, as she *felt*, rather than *saw*, that the young artist's eyes were fixed upon her, her rich golden hair in beautiful confusion, her snowy eyelids trembling as it were beneath the weight of the long, brown lashes, her bosom heaving, she knew not why—and

“Thought sitting on her happy brow, like light;
The young, pure thought, that knows no taint of
sin;
Making the mortal beauty yet more bright,
By the immortal beauty from within.”

How, as he gazed upon her, the painter coveted a Raphael's genius, that he might give to future ages that beauty which seemed to the Enthusiast the ornament and glory of his own !

“ You understand, Signor,” said Miss True-blue, “ that I wish for the portrait of my young friend, not my own ; and as fashions are ever varying, and what looks so well to-day would seem absurd in a few years, I should like her

taken in some simple, classic guise, that never varies."

"Exactly!" said Di Moricini, enthusiastically in Italian; ' Aurora, Flora, Hebe, the youngest of the Graces, a Madonna, a Saint, a Muse, or an Angel!" he added, with an expression that made the warm blood mount to Lucilla's very brow, suffusing her face, and even so much of her neck, as her dress (thrown a little open on account of the heat) allowed to be visible.

"Now, do talk to me in sober English, Signor," said Miss Trueblue, smiling; "Miss Temple understands Italian so well, that to her you may talk as rapidly as you please; but as your mother was English, and you speak English as well as I do—I beg that all conversation meant to include me, may be carried on in the vulgar tongue. Do you not agree to this, Miss Temple?"

"Except," said Lucilla (aside to Miss Trueblue) "that as your preceptress in Italian,

I wish you to seize so favourable an opportunity to improve."

"Dear girl!" said Miss Trueblue; "well, be it as you like; and now to decide on the costume for your portrait."

"Here," cried Di Moricini, bringing forward a large basket full of knicknacks, and articles of fancy costume, and playfully moving the cheval glass, so as to give Lucilla a perfect view of herself. "Now choose; but first, would you object, young lady, to take off your pelisse? Polkas are for a day, but your picture is, we hope, to last when they are forgotten."

Lucilla did as he requested, and her simple white muslin-robe *d la vierge*, was all the artist wished, and all her beauty required.

"Now," said he, taking up a silver star and placing it on her forehead, while he threw a blue and white gauze scarf around her, "Behold, the Morning Star, or—substituting this rosy drapery, and this wreath of opening flowers—what say you to Aurora!"

"Flora!" he cried triumphantly, as he placed a many-coloured garland round her head, and showered flowers around her.

"Or Madonna, with dewy eyes, and looks of love!" he added; as he hastily arranged some dark-blue and crimson draperies, in the style of "Carlo Dolce's Virgin," and bade Lucilla cast down her eyes, and fold her hands on her bosom.

"I like something more herself," said Miss Trueblue.

"Well, then," said Di Moricini, bidding Lucilla rise, and placing a golden vase in her hand—"Psyche, escaping from the realms of Pluto." And he added a light, white scarf to her drapery.

"That is exquisite!" said Miss Trueblue; "the true sublime of simplicity; Psyche let it be; and when you know my young friend better, you will think with me, that it is the very thing, for she is all youth, freshness, and soul!"

Again Lucilla blushed, but less at Miss Trueblue's compliment, than at the gaze with which Di Moricini signified his acquiescence in it.

How rapidly passed the two next hours; Di Moricini talked so well! his mind was so stored with anecdote, and poetry; and Lucilla, now quite at her ease, entered so readily into his discussions with Miss Trueblue, and her opinions so sweetly coincided with his; and then each discovered that the other was a poet, and that is either such a bond of union, or such a signal for jealous discord: but in this case it was the former, and mutual promises were made, of poems to be recited on a future day.

And then the young artist threw open the door of a little boudoir, and there was a table spread with fruits, and flowers, coffee, ices, and jellies. But Miss Trueblue did not seem to think this strange, nor to question the propriety of partaking of the painter's repast,

every article of which seemed the best of its kind ; and so Lucilla followed her example, and another hour passed by on the rainbow wings of joy ; and then Miss Trueblue rose, and Di Moricini having fixed an early day for Lucilla's sitting, they stepped into Miss Trueblue's carriage, and her young companion sank back in a delicious reverie, from which she was not roused till Miss Trueblue kindly asked her to dine with her ; but Lucilla remembering her lone and invalid mother, requested to be set down at home. And as she passed over the worn floor-cloth, and the ragged stair-carpets, and saw her father toiling at his pen, her mother pale and wan, bending over her work, and " wi' her needle, and her shears, making auld claithes look amraigst as weel's the new," then, and not till then, did the realities of life put to flight the first sweet day-dream of the young Lucilla's heart.

CHAPTER II.

Poor Lucilla! she had been dwelling in a fairy-home, which Fancy (best of upholsterers) had fitted up at a moment's notice, with all that could please the eye, and soothe and captivate the heart. 'Twas but a thatched cottage! but how much do such ideal cottages surpass in grace and comfort the real mansions of the rich! It was such a cottage-home as an artist (with moderate success) might be enabled to offer to the object of his choice; and books, and flowers, and music, and the painter's easel, and his own exquisite conceptions glowing on the canvass! These were its

principal ornaments; and Fancy had even brought the Seasons in their turn to visit this fair home of Love and Genius! There was so sweet a garden! (innocent object of a young and loving couple's mutual care and pride); and in its sunny nooks, the first coy violets nestled beneath those Dowagers in dark-green, the Chaperon leaves—and the snow-drop, whom we love so well, because she braves stern winter, to cheer us with her spotless beauty; and the pert crocus, gilded and confident as a City heiress; and the sheltered bower, curtained with ivy, Evergreen of Nature, as the Friendship, which forms the best part of Love, is of the heart! And then Spring melted into Summer, and the bees were busy with their hives on the pretty lawn. And Flora is no longer a coy maiden, charily bestowing a half-unwilling favour now and then, but a fond young matron, lavish of her loveliest treasures, her most blooming children; and the familiar faces of the roses smiled beside the well-kept

path—those old-fashioned roses, known and loved from our childhood—such roses as Eve might have tended in the happy garden, and Adam have offered, ere Sin and Shame were known; such roses as our good fore-mothers wore in their simple bosoms—not the new-fangled triumphs of science, with their Latin names, and complicated natures—but the dear Maiden's Blush, the Damask, the darling Moss Rose, the York and Lancaster, the Cinnamon, the "Rose of Snow," the Yellow Rose, once deemed so rare, that it figures still on many an ancient screen, painted by hands that now are dust! the Rose *unique*, with its red bud expanding into a flower of snowy white, as the little, merry, rosy girl expands into the maiden of spotless purity, the dear old Cabbage Rose! and even the Monthly, with its faint perfume, its delicate tint, and its ever ready smile. These roses figured in Lucilla's fancied garden, roses of Nature, not of Art: and by their side the stately lily grew—

"A fair imperial flower;
She seemed designed for Flora's hand,
The sceptre of her power."

Full of fragrance, and dew, and sunbeams seemed that ivory urn, so redolent of the summer prime! But words and time would fail to describe all the treasures of the parterre that blossomed in Lucilla's day-dream, in delicious June, or all the gorgeous flowers and rich fruits, and yellow corn fields of autumn, or the winter scenery, from which the warm heart of youth did *not* shrink. The glittering hoar frost, lending a sparkling foliage to the trees; the frozen stream, the snowy hills, and the dear fire-side, so trebly welcome, when the sleet falls, and the wind howls, and the desolation without, contrasts so pleasantly with the warmth and happiness within.

And from these vivid dreams of a happy cottage home, shared with one, whose eyes and smile were wonderfully like the young painters', Lucilla was suddenly aroused to all the dis-

comforts of her little town home. Never had it seemed so dingy, dull, and close, to her before! No wonder, fresh from the fairy land of Fancy, the *beau-ideal* of Arcadian bliss, the flowers, the streams, the breezes—she shuddered at the discomforts of the little squalid room, where her father toiled at his pen, and her mother at her needle, both looking so wan, and worn, that Lucilla wondered how *she* could have dreamt of happiness; *she* the child of sufferers, like these! As Lucilla entered, her mother made her a sign to come noiselessly to her side, for her father was wrapt in thought, and nervously alive to the least disturbance! His health and temper were gradually yielding to the exciting nature of his toil; and in the small mean street in which he dwelt, quiet was almost unattainable; for as children generally abound in proportion as money is wanting, so shoals of small individuals sported in the gutters, crowded the pavement, and thronged the door-ways; and loud squalls, and

noisy squabbles, came constantly in at the window, which the heat of the day compelled the Temples to keep open.

At such irritating interruptions, a gesture of distress, an impatient tone, a frown, a biting of the lip, a clenching of the hand, or worse still, a low moan of dejection or despair, escaped Mr. Temple, but did not escape his anxious wife, who, while she toiled at her ungrateful task (the mending a pair of trousers for Tom), was alive to every look, tone, and movement of him she loved with such painful devotion, and watched as woman only can watch.

Silently Lucilla sate down on the ricketty old sofa, on which her mother and her ungainly work were placed, and as she did so, a detestable creaking and groaning of the old and crazy piece of furniture startled Lucilla, caused the colour to rush to Mrs. Temple's wan cheek, and to the horror of both, induced Mr. Temple to rise, push away his table, and ex-

claiming—"It's no use, I must give it up; how odd it is I can never have one moment's peace!" to walk in sullen and resentful haste from the room, taking with him his pen and ink, and his closely written, crabbed-looking, MS.

Lucilla and her mother gazed at each other in dismay—the poor wife, not without a little reproach at her daughter, as she heard Mr. Temple, after rushing up stairs, lock the door of his room, which was over their heads; and perceived that he was walking hastily up and down, in all the impatient agonies of a disturbed and unsuccessful authorship.

"Oh, Lucilla, what have you done?" said Mrs. Temple, her eyes (which looked unnaturally large from the thinness of her face, and the dark hollows that surrounded them) filling with tears. I have sate here all day, without disturbing him, and now you come and drive him away at once. His sweet temper is giving way before this perpetual toil and close con-

finement, and you *must* be more gentle. Strong, healthy young people should try to feel for those whose nerves are not like theirs, proof against every kind of irritation." Mrs. Temple did not seem aware that the same influences were in some degree actuating her in this unwonted rebuke, and Lucilla did not, by a sharp vindication of herself, irritate her poor mother, nor wound her sensitive love for her husband, by any comment on the uncalled for impatience of his behaviour. She merely said, "I will be more careful in future, mamma, how I avail myself of this groaning old sofa; but the change even into another room is good for dear papa, and for you, a little relief from such a watch is most desirable. Now give me that tedious and hard task, mamma! I am quite well, and will soon complete it; and do you lie down and rest till dinner, by which time papa will have embodied his conception, and be quite himself again."

With sweet officiousness, the daughter took

the coarse work from the wan and almost transparent hands of her mother ; shook up the pillows, laid her gently on the sofa, threw her shawl over her, and sitting cheerfully down on a low stool at her side, began, while patching, darning, and stitching, to give her now smiling mother some account of her new pelisse, and her morning adventures. Fearful of alarming her, she made as light as possible of the battle of Norah and the boys, and took care not to awaken any uneasiness in her mind about Lord Trelawney ; and while she minutely described Miss Trueblue's kindness, her drive with her, the old char-woman, and all the curiosities of the painter's abode—for some reason or other, we cannot stop to inquire into—she made little or no comment on the young artist himself.

By degrees Lucilla's voice grew less animated, and her laugh less frequent ; she sank into a reverie, and plied her needle almost mechanically, when, turning round to pick up the scissors, she

saw, to her great joy, that her mother had fallen into a refreshing sleep.

Yes, there lay that best of mothers and of wives, so still, so pale, and wan, that a little stretch of imagination would have made one think that her sleep was the sleep “that knows not waking.” Lucilla was not familiar with death, but she had seen the dead, and the likeness of that sleep to death chilled her heart, even while she heard her mother’s gentle breathing, and saw her bosom beat beneath her robe.

But, oh! as Lucilla pondered on all that mother’s love, and all her sufferings, with what unutterable anguish did she foresee, for one brief, harrowing moment, the time when she might see her thus resting, to wake no more! She gazed and thought, and gazed and thought again; although, each moment sent fresh tears to her eyes, fresh anguish to her heart. Strange anomaly! — the more she dwelt on all her mother had suffered *here*, the more she trem-

bled and writhed at the prospect of her, one day, being *here* no more! And yet, this universal feeling of the young, in contemplating the death of any sufferer they wildly love, can be explained, in a youthful and boundless faith in the “world to come.” They think the Future must atone, and they cannot bear that their darlings should have known only the bitter Past, and dreary Present; while they are cut off from, what seems to them, the golden and atoning Future. We know so little, so very very little of the secret hearts of our nearest and dearest, that even Lucilla was not aware how much of late her mother had looked to the future beyond the grave, for the recompense of all her sufferings; how perpetual disappointment and privation, were weaning her once sanguine spirit from this disappointing world; and how little its best gifts could charm her now, save only those she already enjoyed—her husband’s and her children’s love.

And, yet she had been too much a Martha,

once, of that worldliness, which in its care, its anxiety, and its ambition for others, rather than self, ceases to warn and to revolt, and becomes dangerously beguiling and engrossing. But, as the Psalmist says so well :—“Sweet are the uses of adversity ;” and ill health, by subduing earthly energies and wordly hopes, and even physical powers, has a purifying and ennobling influence, which, if purchased at the expense of much and long suffering, is yet not too dearly bought.

Yes ! there lay that pure and gentle matron ; and there watched that tender and devoted child ; the pallid and almost holy beauty of the mother, contrasting exquisitely with the rich and radiant loveliness of the weeping girl. How faintly beat that bosom, which had often throbbed wildly so with a wife’s thousand and nameless fears, and a mother’s ceaseless cares ! How pale the cheek so often wildly flushed with despair, or with the restless oft-deferred hopes which are scarce less hard to bear ! How many secret tears have dimmed those closed

eyes! and, oh, more touching still: how often has Lucilla seen them bright with groundless expectations, and delusive hopes! Those pale lips! how often have they smiled, and whispered comfort and peace to her husband's ear, and in private murmured words of dejected anguish, generally succeeded by the humble prayer of resignation and of faith. Often, often, when a child, too young to be heeded, but not too young to heed, Lucilla has heard that moan, and that prayer, but never did its reality affect her then (though it saddened her childish heart too), as its memory tortures her now! Then busy fancy presents that attenuated form, animated by sleepless love, up early and late, bending over the couch of sickness, flitting with sweet cheerfulness about the home in health: and those dear hands—ah, what a language is there in the hand of those we love! how have they toiled, all frail and delicate as they are! with what untiring zeal at midnight, and at early morn, they laboured in the hus-

band's or the children's cause! Lucilla looked back even to early childhood, on her garments, above her parents' means (save that they were the work of those dear hands)—such comfort, and such taste. Oh, the rich treasures of a mother's love! She sighed as she sank on her knees beside the couch, and prayed; and when she raised her eyes they fell upon the drooping head, the soft brown hair! once celebrated far and wide for its glossy abundance! It was parted on the high, pure brow, but here and there a line of premature silver showed that Care and Sorrow can do the work of Time; and Lucilla could still remember when those now thin and weakly braids were her father's open boast, and her mother's secret pride—when, ere sad experience had taught them caution, and Pleasure's voice sometimes drowned the whisper of Prudence, and the husband could not resist the pleasure of seeing his wife shine, nor bear to deny her all the amusements of the young—those tresses were

braided with pearls, or trained into glossy ringlets, or crowned with flowers; and where the snows of winter now began to peep out, the golden sunbeams seemed to sport. How often in childhood have her little hands played with and twisted their long silken wreaths, her father joining in the idle sport as fondly as herself. Now they were simply drawn across the pale forehead, and no one seemed to deem them worth a thought or care: but oh, not so Lucilla—she loved them, worn and faded as they were; no locks that ever waved round Beauty's brow, could be one thousandth part so sacred, or so dear—no, not the rich brown curls of the young artist, though they did pass before her mental vision, and she *did* pause on dwell upon them; and this transition has given a turn to her thoughts—her mother's refreshing slumber has cast a soft roseate tint on her cheek, and in her sleep she smiles. The Present and the Future resume their empire over the young heart, and Hope is at her post again.

"Oh, she will yet be well, yet be happy," thought Lucilla. "She is not old—life may have much in store for her yet! and I will so cheer, so watch, so tend her; she must know him, she will like him! But, no, no; a foreigner, an artist—alas! alas! and yet my prejudices faded away at once before his smile—why not hers!" Ah, Lucilla, the prejudices of forty are more rooted than those of seventeen.

"Ah, there's papa's step; he must not wake her."

Gently Lucilla stole to meet her father, gently she warned him not to rouse her mother—and so, fondly parting her hair, and kissing her fair brow, he whispered his intention of walking for half an hour before dinner; and as he gently opened the street door, Lucilla noiselessly returned to her mother's side.

"Ah, my darling! are you there, *still*?" said Mrs. Temple when she woke; "how re-

freshed I feel ! Where is your father ? Have I slept long ? ”

“ No, about an hour, dearest ! ”

“ And is you papa writing still, love ! ”

“ Oh, no, mamma ! he is gone out for a short walk before dinner ; I would not let him come in, lest he should awake you.”

“ You saw him, then—how did he look ? ”

“ Quite cheerful, and he spoke in such a happy voice, I am sure he has succeeded at last. So cheer up, dearest mamma, and come up stairs, and let me dress you ; a new cap, and another dress, will make you feel and look quite yourself.”

“ But I wanted to see a little to the dinner ; your papa cannot make a dinner on Norah’s unaided efforts.”

“ But I can help her, and I will ; I think I have quite a genius for cookery, and you shall let me exhibit it. Now darling, mamma ! first let me be your *femme de chambre* ; then give

me 'Mrs. Rundell,' and when I return, having dressed the dinner and myself, to the drawing-room, you shall see papa will not know I have been anything but a fine lady all the time.

CHAPTER III.

How much delicious and graceful comfort can one affectionate, intellectual, and energetic daughter, infuse into the whole establishment ! What a perpetual sunbeam may she be, lighting up the gloomiest, the poorest home ! What ornament to a house so charming as her loveliness ? What luxury can supply the place of her sweet officiousness ? What hirelings (however accomplished and expensive) can do things as she does them, guided by her clever head and warm heart ? What music is there in her cheerful voice, her merry laugh ? What

comfort in her very presence? Ah! no marvel that to the parents of such a daughter, the marriage bell (which is music to the ear of the sordid parents of the Artificial, and the Vain) is the knell of domestic happiness. They do not oppose, they *will* not complain; their child's welfare and comfort are dearer to them than their own: but the glory is gone from their house, the comfort from their hearths; she may visit their home, but she cannot dwell there—she is no longer a part of it.

In such a family as the Temples a daughter like Lucilla was indeed an atoning blessing. She was so very fond, so true, so real, so brightly intellectual, so winningly playful, humorous, and merry; and yet so sensitive, so sympathizing, and so anxious!

Under her cheerful superintendence, Norah has neatly served up a modest, but inviting dinner; she knows her parents delight in her beauty, and so she has dressed herself as neatly

and arranged her “soft alluring locks” as gracefully, as if to her it were as dear an object to please the eyes that loved her, as to captivate those of strangers; and this duty she seldom neglected, for even in his poverty, Mr. Temple always set the example of a rigid attention to the proprieties and courtesies of life (a broad distinction that, between the gently and the lowly born). There is something touching in it at all times; it brings so forcibly to the mind the contrast between original prospects, and actual position, between early hopes, and ultimate realities, hereditary habits, customs, nay, almost instincts! Sad inheritance, where they are unattended by any other!

It was affecting to see Mr. Temple’s careful toilet for his humble dinner; the old dress-coat, almost threadbare; the silk stockings, now almost one darn; the shoes, of which hardly any of the original leather remained; but the scrupulous cleanliness, the exquisite neatness, the very tie of the home-washed, white neck-

cloth, in all, the thorough-bred and perfect gentleman, might still be traced; and the same hereditary spirit might be seen in the somewhat old-fashioned and faded, but well-preserved, wardrobe of Mrs. Temple; the blonde cap, so often washed by Norah, and re-made by Lucilla, the turned silk dress, and the long-hoarded black lace shawl.

As with a courtesy as graceful as that with which an Earl would have handed his Countess to the banquet-hall, Mr. Temple led in his lovely and invalid wife to the little shabby dining-room, and placed her at the poorly supplied table, Lucilla felt her eyes fill with tears, and an earnest prayer rose from her very heart, that she might yet be the happy means of restoring those dear ones to the station they were so calculated to adorn.

But there is a triumph, and a joy in Mr. Temple's eyes, which is ever reflected in those of his wife. He has conquered a difficulty which had long impeded his progress in his

work ; he feels he has eloquently and irresistibly proved an important truth, and his heart is full of a happiness, known only to an author.

The chickens (a present from Miss True-blue) are pronounced excellent ; and an omelette, Lucilla has superintended, is considered a complete success. But we anticipate.

On sitting down to dinner, Mr. Temple asked with some anxiety for Tom, who had not been heard of since he set off in the morning to breakfast with Sir Felix Archer. After some discussion on the subject, it was decided, that in all probability Sir Felix had detained him to spend the day ; and some hopes arose in the parents' hearts that their boy had found a powerful friend.

At this very moment a knock was heard, and Norah rushed in, to say a footman in livery had brought a letter, and waited for a message.

This letter proved to be a large, curiously-folded epistle, in a round hand, and sealed with

an immense coat of arms. It was from Tom, and ran as follows :—

“ Sir Felix Archer’s, Bart.,
“ 101, Portland Place,
“ London, July 1st, 1840.

“ DEAR PAPA.

“ *I* and Sir Felix mean, with your leave, to spend the day together ; we have had breakfast and lunch, and are going to dine at seven ; after dinner, he is coming with me to tea, if agreeable to you.

“ I hope Lucilla will make herself a great swell, as, if she does not look sharp, some one else will cut her out, I can tell her. Her namesake has been writing a letter to Sir Felix Archer full of palaver, begging for a copy of his ‘Essay on Taste,’ and a great deal of humbug. I and Sir Felix had a good laugh at it.

“ I hope you will have something good for tea, and I dare say Jock would wait, as the

family is out of town. Treacle is nice, but I don't know whether Sir Felix Archer likes it, and I suppose it would be rude to ask. Sir Felix is sending off his 'Essay' and a note, to Lucilla Undermine, sealed with such a tiny crest, but I have borrowed his large seal for my letter. Perhaps some day Lucilla may seal her letters with it. So no more at present, from, Dear Papa, with love to mamma and Lucilla,

“ Your affectionate and dutiful Son,
“ THOMAS TEMPLE.”

“ I have been to a Morning Concert with Sir Felix: it was very grand, and rather dull; our cousins the Temples, of Temple Grove, were there, and made up so to Sir Felix! they were mighty kind to me, for the first time; but as they cut me dead two years ago, I did not notice them much. The six Miss Temples were there, all dressed in green; Sir Felix says he calls them 'Temple Grove,' they always wear green, and are so tall they look like trees. They asked

me and him to dinner, but we refused. They said it was so long since they had seen my sister; I replied, it was so long, that I wondered they remembered I had one.

"Sir Felix told me afterwards that was a capital hit! One gave him a pink, another a rose, a third said she had knitted a purse for him. Lucilla had better look sharp, for every girl is setting her cap at my friend the Baronet. I enclose a note from Sir Felix."

On glazed and scented paper, the Baronet had written:—

"MY DEAR TEMPLE.

"Your sweet boy insists that I shall not be unwelcome this evening at the tea-table of my charming friends, your lovely wife and daughter. Pray offer my best respects, and beg them to confirm by a verbal message this pleasing assertion of my friend Tom. I have presumed to send a little fruit and a few flowers, just arrived from Felix Park, the former for the fair con-

valescent, the latter for your accomplished daughter, ‘herself a fairer flower.’

“I am ever, dear Temple,

“Yours, most truly,

“FELIX ARCHER.”

“P.S.—I have a private box at the Haymarket this evening, and Tom and I have formed a plan for inveigling you there. ‘The School for Scandal’ will surely tempt the ladies, but of this when we meet. I shall be quite hurt if you write, as I find from Tom, this will arrive at your dinner-time. ‘Yes, or No,’ will suffice.”

“Now, do take him at his word, dear papa,” said Lucilla; “let me ring for Norah, and if you like to have him to tea, just say so, with your compliments.”

“If I like,” said Mr. Temple; “ah! little rogue, of course I like it, as you do too.”

“Indeed, that is not of course, papa; however, don’t let your dinner get cold, but while you write, just send word, as he begs you to.”

" My love, do you think he will not expect more ceremony ? "

" I assure you, papa, he is one of that numerous class who behave the better the less they are courted ; do you remember the dreadful day he dined here, when we all immolated ourselves at his shrine, and how he spurned the sacrifice ? "

" Ah, but 'a change has come o'er the spirit of his dream,' " said the papa, smiling archly ; " however, be it as you like ; I do not wish to interfere with your management of him, my darling treasure."

" No, no," said Mrs. Temple, who generally saw through her husband's eyes, and felt through his heart, " leave him to Lucilla. I think this pretty humble note is a good specimen of her schooling."

There was a sickness at Lucilla's heart, as she heard these words of much meaning, and marked the hope and pride that sparkled in her parents' eyes, and flushed their cheeks.

How could she damp the joy so rarely felt, how crush the hope so often crushed before! She turned to the bell to ring for Norah; and while her father sent his message, which from Norah's absurd misapprehensions and blunders, he was obliged to give to the tall courtly footman himself, Lucilla came to the decision, so common to the young, to shut out the future, and enjoy the present; to give Sir Felix no encouragement, but to receive and treat him with the cordiality and kindness due to her father's friend — not to admit, even to her own heart, that he wished to be her suitor (which, whispered Sophistry, no woman has a right to presume until a formal declaration to that effect has been made to her); and then, as at seventeen we dwell on the lights, rather than the shadows, of the picture of life, she thought that as a friend, Sir Felix, so wealthy, so elegant, and so attentive, would be a great acquisition to her parents, and perhaps a benefactor to Tom. And there lay the beautiful basket of rare fruits,

with their first bloom; while the refined and exquisite fragrance of the choice hot-house flowers he had sent her, filled the room. And it *is* pleasant to be admired and flattered by the elegant and the refined. And then the play—so rare a pleasure! and such a play! and a private box too! All, even the very drive to the theatre and home again, were joys to the new, unsated heart of the young Lucilla.

CHAPTER IV.

THE little dinner ended merrily, and the unexpected dessert (worthy of a palace) was a treat indeed! and as Lucilla marked her mother's enjoyment of the matchless fruit—an enjoyment she had not for years seen her feel in anything she took—she for a moment tried to figure to herself the probability of accepting Sir Felix, should he indeed propose, and thus securing to her dear parents for ever, many comforts and pleasures they could not else enjoy. But the next moment she pressed her hand upon her eyes, to shut out as it were the

very picture her own fancy had conjured up ; she could not bear it ; it blanched her cheek, and sent a shudder through her very heart. Luckily, her parents were intently discussing the prospects, which the partiality of Sir Felix might open to Tom ; and when Lucilla left the room to see to the arrangement of the drawing-room, and the preparation for tea, Mrs. Temple, with a woman's tact and a mother's instinct, suggested to her husband the propriety of not seeming to wish to bias Lucilla in Sir Felix's favour, and of appearing to consider him rather as a family friend than her suitor. " We shall make her dislike him, and ruin her prospects, if we appear anxious to bias her in his favour before he has won upon her affections by his attentions and his elegance. Woman's heart is always of the Opposition ; and many girls would marry happily, and for love too, if not injudiciously urged by others, to do what if left to themselves, they would naturally decide upon."

Cleverly, and quickly, the neat-handed Lu-

cilla decked the little drawing-room with the exquisite flowers Sir Felix had sent her, reserving a choice bouquet for her own bosom, and an exquisite camelia for her hair. What with the flowers, and the fancy works, Lucilla's harp, piano, and guitar, the embroidery she displayed, and the screens she had painted, the little room had such an air *de fête*, and Lucilla with her flowers, and white dress, looked so fresh and Flora-like, that Mr. and Mrs. Temple, on entering, exchanged glances, which seemed to say, "Love has something to do with all this," and joined in exclamations of delight and pleasure, which amply repaid Lucilla for her toil and trouble.

The tea and coffee were in readiness, and what with a few cakes, and some of the fruits Sir Felix had sent, the table looked very pretty and inviting; although the old china, with the Temple arms, was disfigured by sundry cracks and rivets, and Time had laid his withering touch on the little thin silver

spoons, worn by the cleanings of many years to a painful and knife-like sharpness. The tea-pot, too, was one from which legends told that two centuries before a lovely matron of the Temple line (ancestress of our young Lucilla) had had the honour of dispensing the then modern beverage to Charles the Martyr, and to her who was at once the Queen of Beauty and of England, the exquisite Henrietta Maria. It was in the early days of those dreadful troubles, which made this great King so much more dear and sacred to all true hearts, that this high honour had been conferred at once on the tea-pot and the Temples; but it was a cherished heir-loom in consequence, and had been treasured so, that it had escaped the wreck of all beside; and with its antique shape, it seemed to tell of Charles's bowing cavaliers, and dames whose long locks and taper waists Lely has transmitted to us. It was quaint, worn, small, and originally inconvenient, and had besides every vice to

which tea-pots are addicted; for though a wretched pourer of the tea, it was lavish of the tea-leaves; closed very imperfectly at top, had even a propensity to leak, and the handle being of thin, sharp silver, was very hot and painful to the hand. However, the choice lay between this old aristocrat, with its poverty and its pride, around which gathered the imperfections and the hallowed memories of the Past, and a coarse, large, black, plebeian tea-pot, of the true kitchen breed, warranted as a drawer, and a pourer; and a capital drawer, and pourer it was—a tea-pot of the modern Utilitarian school. The Past and the Present seemed embodied by these two tea-pots. Luccilla, whom, as tea-maker, it most concerned, hesitated for a moment; but she was a Temple, and the aristocratic offspring of the Past triumphed over the vulgar utility of the Present.

It is only a few weeks since that wretched day on which Sir Felix Archer was expected to

dinner—that day of toil, of misery, of mortification, and defeat; to the outward eye all is much the same, Pride and Poverty, preparing to receive supercilious Wealth. But yet how great, though silent and secret a change is there—Lucilla is no longer eager, flushed, and anxious; she feels in her inmost heart an indifference, nay, almost a contempt for the preference she has won; she has beheld and listened to one whom she could love, and she now feels that no other can make her heart beat, or her cheek glow. The calm beauty of her expression, and the graceful *nonchalance* of her manner, are however much more fascinating than the nervous anxiety of her demeanour on Sir Felix's former visit, her watchful eye, and her burning cheek.

Since that time much has happened. Lucilla has acquired some degree of self-dependence: she has been called upon to act; she has felt the pride of being useful; and whatever drawbacks there may be to the enjoyment of the sensitive

and the gently-born in bartering exertion for money, there is no one who does not feel an atoning satisfaction and pride, in being able to earn.

The talents that others are ready not merely to command but to remunerate, gain a new value in the eyes of their possessors ; and to every woman of spirit there is comfort in the conviction that she can support herself, and assist those dear to her by the exercise of her talents ; a source of profit so noble when compared to the meanness of selling her hand to one she perhaps loathes, for wealth—or, it may be, for mere maintenance.

But the unusual sound of a carriage at the door makes Lucilla leave the tea-table she was arranging and take her seat beside her mother, whose heart beat much higher than did the young girl's, when Jock, whom Norah had borrowed on her own responsibility, threw open the door, and announced Sir Felix Archer.

Tom came in shortly after, having stopped

on the stairs to pour a few boasts into the willing ear of Jock. How gracefully cordial was Sir Felix's manner—how earnestly he inquired into Mrs. Temple's symptoms—how softly he pressed Lucilla's hand — how cordially shook her father's, calling him, “ Temple, my dear fellow.”

Can he be in love! We know that no age, from fifteen to eighty-five, forms any exemption; but some natures, it has been thought, do. An interested, selfish, cold-hearted, fashionable, who had been twice married, and had been angled for by all the belles of many seasons, and their more experienced and adroit mammas—can he be in love, and with an artless girl of seventeen, her father a poor curate, her mother so simple and sincere, her brother unprovided for, and, what had ever been his especial horror, a boy—a pert, forward, sarcastic, prying boy—a girl, surrounded by all the attributes of a poverty he so loathes. Dan Cupid, thou art indeed the prince of

archers, if thy shaft has pierced the crust of selfishness of that cold heart! It cannot surely be.

And yet, though Sir Felix is always elegant in his dress, there are symptoms (generally unerring ones); a long consultation with M. Alamode, the Court coiffeur, has ended in a *toupe*, which, though perfect of its kind, adds, as such contrivances generally do, to the age they are meant to take from. It gives an artificial and a harsh expression to the face, ill-atoned for by the formal and jet-black curls and the juvenile head. Then the waistcoat, embroidered as if by a fairy; the choice flower in a dress-coat, as gay as modern taste permits, lined with a rich figured satin; the point-lace jabot, and ruffles; the white muslin cravat, edged with the same; the exquisite pumps and silk stockings, and the one costly brilliant on the little finger of the white and well-trained hand: in all this there was more than the ordinary attention to the toilette, which is one of the dis-

tinguishing marks of the *far niente* class. And Tom, how full of conceit and assurance was Tom! Tom, who had had the run of Sir Felix's boudoir, how had he plastered his hair with fragrant pomades and bandoline, and darkened it with compositions "*pour lisser et pour teindre les cheveux.*" How foppishly had he arranged his bushy and clustering red-hair, how proudly he sported a brooch and a ring, which Sir Felix, detesting his taste for ornament, had insisted on his accepting (stipulating only, that Norah's ridiculous loan should be consigned to his pocket). "All Arabia" seemed to breathe as he moved.

Atkinson and Delcroix were advertised in his person. He ordered Jock about with something of the hauteur he had remarked in Sir Felix towards his servants, and whispering to Lucilla—"We left the dessert to come and take you to the play, so look sharp with the tea," he began most inconveniently to ridicule and comment on the defects of the arrangements,

taking care, however, to introduce the tea-pot and its history to Sir Felix's notice.

"Well, Lucilla, you are determined to *rivet* Sir Felix's attention," said the enraging boy, pointing to the rivets in a plate of cakes he was requested to hand. "Really, we ought to tell Sir Felix that we use this old china because it has the Temple arms on it, and has been in our family so many hundred years!"

"And for the still better reason, that we have no other, Tom!" said Lucilla, gently, ashamed of her silly brother's palpable and ill-placed boasts.

"I hope you'll excuse that *crack*, Sir Felix," continued the pert and provoking boy; "Lucilla being a little *cracked* herself, is very fond of anything that is so too."

Sir Felix seeing Lucilla's annoyance, appeared not to hear Tom, but turned to Mrs. Temple to praise the painting of one of Lucilla's screens.

"I desire you, Tom," whispered Lucilla, "not to allude to any defects you see in the

things we have ; you well know we have no others."

" *You desire, Miss Cross-patch !* don't think to order me about, you cross thing ; you're as jealous as a cat because I've dined with Sir Felix, and not you, and so I'll tell him."

" Oh, Tom, I implore you not to do so!" eagerly whispered Lucilla.

" I say, Sir Felix," cried the enraging boy ; " what do you think of Lucilla ?"

" More than I dare to tell," interrupted the admiring Baronet, as a vivid blush mantled her cheek.

" Oh, yes ! that's all very fine ! but what do you think of her being ready to scratch me, because I've dined with you, and she hasn't ?"

" Oh, Tom ! indeed, Sir Felix !" began poor Lucilla.

" Tom ! you tease your sister," said Mr. Temple, in a voice so stern, that his son changed his tone ; " alter your conduct, sir, or I shall send you to bed !"

Tom, in spite of his scent and his finery, looked very "small" on hearing this; and a suppressed titter was heard from the end of the room, where Jock, coming in with a kettle, stopped to stifle a laugh at Tom's expense, failing in which, he and the kettle hastily retired.

But Sir Felix, evidently much flattered, said, "Let me plead for my dear friend, Tom! and to punish his impertinence, Miss Temple, let me beg you to honour me by saying what day I may hope for the happiness of seeing you and your papa and mamma in Portland Place; I hope Tom will make himself so agreeable in the interim, that his company will be as desirable to you on that occasion, as it will be to me!"

This seemed so amiable and conciliating, that Lucilla could not but express her readiness to accept the invitation, if quite agreeable to her parents; they cordially consented, even Mrs. Temple declaring she would make an

effort to go, although she had not dined out for more than five years. The important day was fixed at a week from that time, and Tom began to exhibit great impatience to be off to the theatre—an impatience not at all shared by Sir Felix, who, although accustomed to the most luxuriant couches, seemed particularly charmed with the creaking, groaning, ricketty, old sofa, where, seated beside Mrs. Temple, he could contemplate at his ease the animated and graceful Lucilla.

CHAPTER IV.

AFTER much persuasion, Mr. Temple consented to accompany his children to the theatre. He had declined at first, and thus, as Mrs. Temple was too delicate for public places, and Lucilla could not well go without one of her parents, the project must have been relinquished. Sir Felix seemed perfectly content to remain where he was ; plays were no novelties to him, but Love and Lucilla were ; and his faint “ Do come, Temple, Farren’s Sir Peter Teazle is such a hit,” would have had little weight but for the passionate and

persevering entreaties of the half-sobbing Tom, and one silent but restless tear which he half detected in the appealing eyes of his Lucilla! Mr. Temple remembered how little she had seen of the pleasures so lavished on others of her age; he saw that Tom would burst into an open fit of crying; he saw that his meek, fond wife even pleaded, though she did not speak, and so he agreed to go. Tom evinced a very unaristocratic degree of boisterous joy; and even Lucilla blushed with a pleasure a fashionable belle would have marvelled at and despised.

Sir Felix somewhat unwillingly arose, and as he detected Lucilla's gaze wander from him in all his modern elegance, and his glossy, new *toupé*, to Mr. Temple, in his shabby attire, and with his thin hair tinged with gray, he felt convinced that to stand for a few moments in a graceful attitude by her father, would be to complete the conquest he felt sure he had begun.

But the contrast was affecting Lucilla in a

very different manner; she was thinking, as she gazed alternately at her father and Sir Felix, how almost unattainable is the hereditary *air noble*, sole visible heritage of poor Temple; she was deciding how much better Nature managed than Art; that on the brow of middle-age the locks of boyhood were unsuitable, and therefore ungraceful; and that her father's black suit, worn and shabby as it was, was much more dignified and endearing than Sir Felix's bridegroom-like finery.

How artificial was his smile! how studied his attitude during this little interval! how carefully he exhibited a white hand, with its lace ruffle and diamond ring, and how jauntily extended a foot for which Nature had done much and Art more. And all this while he cast up his eyes as if in rapturous thought, but in reality to show them off; and he *felt*, though he did not see it, that both Lucilla and Mrs. Temple were looking at him, and so they were—Mrs. Temple, with a prepossession in his favour, which made

her see all he did *en beauté*, was deciding that he was *still* a very fine man, and one any girl might be proud to marry; and Lucilla, with a much keener sense of the ridiculous, and her feelings enlisted against him, that he was a regular show-off, a complete antidote to love; and when, stealing another glance at him, she saw him still in the same attitude, she was obliged hastily to turn away to conceal the mirth which she feared her countenance would betray.

Her shawl furnished her with a good excuse, and Sir Felix gracefully darted forward to help her to put it on. He then, with an almost affectionate courtesy (which became him well), took leave of Mrs. Temple, and handed Lucilla into his carriage. As they came down stairs, his two tall powdered footmen, in their maroon coats of the graceful cut of the olden time, their silver buttons, their white silk stockings, white gloves, and long sticks, looked absurdly out of keeping with the little mean passage (with its worn and faded oil-cloth) where they stood.

At the approach of our party, a little giggle and scuffle was heard; for Norah had been amusing herself with the two powdered beaux—and being fully impressed with the idea, that for all their fine coats, they were “no more nor her aquals,” had engaged them in a conversation which showed that in ready wit they were very far from being so. The merry laugh, white teeth, and black eyes of the broad-faced, good-humoured Munster woman, roused them a little from the apathy and inanity they had assumed in imitation of their successive master, and Jock coming to Norah’s aid, a lively discussion was in progress; but at the sound of Sir Felix’s voice, they drew up, assumed the stiffness and stillness of sentinels, and Norah crying out, “Och hone, it’s myself wouldn’t be in the shoes of ye, for all yer pride and finery; for when Sir Falix spakes, it’s not the likes of ye prasume to tell yer sowl’s yer own, even if ye had any, which it’s meself is by no manes sure of. Come, Jock! you’re the boy for my money!” She then darted down

stairs, her merry Munster laugh ringing in the ears of the stately footmen, who were so perfect in their *metier*, that no automatons could have been more unmoved.

Tom assumed an air of great importance as he stepped into the carriage after the rest of the party; indeed, in his eagerness to enter the vehicle with grace, he slipped and severely cut his heel; but Tom was a hero, though in a wrong cause (the cause of Vanity), so he forced a smile while he ground his teeth with sickening anguish, and with a flourish meant to impose on the tall footmen, and to dazzle short Jock, he called out, “To the Haymarket Theatre!” and the perfect equipage was soon in motion.

Sir Felix smiled with princely condescension and benignity at the pride and impetuosity displayed in Tom’s breach of etiquette; but Mr. Temple calmly reprimanded the flushed and inflated boy, for presuming to give an order to Sir Felix’s servants in their master’s presence.

“Nay,” said Sir Felix, in a tone and with a

manner that made Lucilla think him almost amiable, “do not blame my dear friend Tom ; you do not know, Temple, how great an intimacy and how warm a friendship Tom and I have struck up ; and friendship has privileges, hasn’t it Tom ? Come, cheer up, my boy ! Papa is quite right in taming you betimes to the etiquette of that society in which I hope some day to see you shine ; but as far as I am concerned, nothing refreshes me so much as the happy confidence and eager hope of the very young. I remember when a play could so gladden my heart and bewilder my brain—in boyhood, our sources of joy are so many, so harmless, and so accessible —in manhood,” he added with a sigh, and stealing a glance at Lucilla, “these wells of joy may be deeper, and the draught more delicious and more intoxicating ; but oh, what a search, what toil, ere we find it ; what greater toil ere we win it ; and even then, what poison and despair may lurk in the cup ! ”

Lucilla could not help understanding his mean-

ing, nor blushing to the very temples, beneath the ardent gaze Sir Felix fixed on her. To laugh off her embarrassment she began to rally him, and said, "So, Sir Felix, my namesake has been committing to paper her admiration of you and your genius."

"Tom, have you then betrayed me?" said the Baronet, reproachfully.

A start and a shriek from Lucilla followed. Tom, unable to contain his wrath at her betrayal of his report, at once trod heavily on her foot, and sharply pinched her arm.

"What is it?" sternly asked Mr. Temple, who had his suspicions.

"What is it, fairest?" tenderly inquired Sir Felix.

"I trod on her foot," said Tom, terrified at the expression of his father's face. "I beg your pardon, dear Lucilla," he added, with so appealing a look and in so broken a voice, that Lucilla could not resist them, and merely said, "She should be better presently, Tom *had* trodden on her foot."

"On such a fairy foot! Oh, Tom, Tom!" said Sir Felix.

"Come and sit here, Tom," said his father, angrily, "and the next time I have cause to reprimand you, I send you home!"

Tom sat sulky and abashed.

"We were speaking," said Sir Felix, "of the letter of your fair young namesake, which I, as Tom was present, asked him to read to me, not aware that it was anything more than a formal note of invitation or so. Now, as Tom has made the most of it, I, in justice to the young lady, and lest your quick fancy should wrong her, will show you the epistle myself. It is sweetly written, and I think it does the writer much honour."

"Perhaps it is hardly fair to show it," said Lucilla, with instinctive delicacy.

"Allow me, my dear Miss Temple, to judge of that," said Sir Felix, with an assumption of injured dignity which startled and awed Lucilla. "It would be perfectly impossible for me to

offer to show this letter, if, by so doing, I in the slightest degree violated the fair writer's confidence, or trifled with her feelings."

"Oh no, of course not!" said Lucilla, much confused.

"Of course not; there we agree; and now for the letter. I never show a woman's letter unless it redounds in every way to her credit."

Lucilla, quite awed, took the letter in silence.

"Oblige me by reading it aloud," said the Baronet.

Lucilla hesitated. "I am unacquainted with the hand," she said.

"Read it, my love," said Mr. Temple; "all women write alike."

"Pshaw!" growled Tom, "if you cannot read writing, Lucilla, I can, and that is like print."

"Exactly," said Mr. Temple; "some lawyer or lawyer's clerk has been the lady's writing-master. Read, child."

Lucilla began:—

"DEAR SIR FELIX.

" I have been vainly trying all day at the different libraries and booksellers to procure your 'Essay on Taste.' In vain, in vain ! Can a greedy, yet discerning public, have devoured every copy ? I have a little enlivened this disheartening search by discussions on its merits, with those most *au fait* in these matters ; and except where a malignant envy and base hostility were hideously apparent, I found but one opinion, namely, that it is perfection. Oh, Sir Felix ! I gloried as I heard the music of your praises from the lips of the initiated ; I gloried in the thought that I had sat in your presence, listened to your converse, basked in your intellectual smile, and even at parting, touched your gifted hand ! Nay, more ; in my inmost heart—the silly heart of a wild, impassioned girl—I have ventured to register a vow that I *will* win your friendship, great and gifted as you are ! For oh, how often the great may need a humble friend ; and what friend, oh Sir Felix ! like

that woman, the slumbering poetry of whose nature your genius has kindled into an ungovernable flame. I can fancy no pleasure (and yet I am of that age when pleasure seems most bright and boundless), I can fancy no pleasure like that of sitting at your feet and drinking in the musical philosophy of your eloquent sublimity!

"I do not expect you to reciprocate such a reverential admiration as this. I am not mad: the sun shines on countless violets; to them he is the life of life; but what are they to him? And so with you, and the many, many maidens who feel, I doubt not, something of the enthusiasm you have kindled in your poor Lu-cilla!

"In me this feeling is merely appreciation of the beautiful. The *tau kalon* found in your genius, but tinged by my woman nature with something of that anxious and protecting watchfulness never separated from woman's interest and woman's friendship!

“The maternity of her nature colours all her feelings. Oh, Sir Felix ! even the man she reveres, looks up to and clings to, she yet pants to shelter, to comfort, to protect—so could I wish to shield you from every ill ; so could I revel in in your every joy, so love and serve and revere the happy being you may love. To me she must be an idol, being yours.

“Only repay this boundless and wild friendship with some trust, some confidence ; tell me the hopes of that noble heart—the plans of that gifted head. Above all, send me the ‘Essay on Taste.’

“In many periodicals to which I have access (for my pen is ever busy in translating my thoughts), I can tell the world how great a treasure it possesses. Adieu ! ponder on this letter, and deign to answer it—but *that* I know you will ; for you are as distinguished for chivalry and courtesy as for genius and learning.

“LUCILLA.”

Several times Lucilla could scarcely suppress

a laugh at the most high-flown sentences of this inflated and yet rather eloquent rhapsody;—but she did not keep her countenance, for Sir Felix was listening with half-closed eyes, elevated eyebrows, smile of satisfaction, and the dignified composure of a mandarin, nodding his head at the most extravagant perorations, and keeping time as it were with his foot and hand.

Mr. Temple, after listening to the first sentence, had been lulled by the cadences of Lucilla's voice into a reverie about his book, and Tom was taken up with the shops.

"What soul! what mind! that girl has evinced," said Sir Felix. "Is it not wonderful?"

"It is, indeed," said Lucilla. "Have you sent her your 'Essay.'"

"I have; and I shall much like to compare your opinions on it. Tom has a copy for you. I shall request you to commit your impressions to paper.

"Oh, no," said Lucilla, "I am no critic, no reviewer."

“Every one who forms an opinion of a work is a critic, and every one who expresses that opinion a reviewer, my dear Miss Temple ; so oblige me, I pray. I long to see that gifted girl’s notices of my ‘Essay.’ I have answered her letter, and I wish to submit that answer to you. But here we are at the entrance of the Haymarket.”

“That’s right, Tom ! (Tom had bought a supply of play-bills); I meant to persuade you, my fair friend, after the play to take a *petit-souper* at my house, and then I can submit to you my reply to this letter; it is right you should see it.”

Lucilla was a woman, and she certainly felt some little curiosity to see, what she suspected would be a rather pedantic, egotistical, and coxcombical effusion ; but she did not like Sir Felix’s manner of offering her this amusement, it was so much as if he looked upon her as interested and concerned in all his proceedings with another lady—as if he established and re-

cognised in her a right to his confidence, which none but his affianced, or his wife could pretend to.

However, there was no opportunity for making Sir Felix understand her disapproval and annoyance; for with a courteous deference which always excites some softening gratitude in a young girl's heart, the great Sir Felix was handing the poor Lucilla Temple from his carriage, as if she had been a Princess alighting from her own. Proudly he put back some among the most forward of the mob assembled at the doors of the theatre, and who, seeing so aristocratic an equipage and so beautiful a girl, pressed round her, murmuring, "Who is she?" "My eye, what a beauty!" "He's a regular old swell!" "He's a tip-topper!" and so on.

Lucilla, though nervous at the sensation she excited, could not but feel that little flutter at her heart, which the unequivocal symptoms and expressions of admiration excite in any girl to whom they are new.

Tom looked very belligerent, and his hauteur of manner and dandy style of dress infuriated some radical boys in rags, who coarsely vented their anger in ribald jests and remarks, full of revolting and personal sarcasm, not without their cutting and wanton wit, which made Tom clench his fist and turn upon his revilers; a scuffle would certainly have ensued, had not Mr. Temple and the tall footman come up and threatened the young warriors with the police; and as ‘the Police’ were words which sounded harshly in their ears, they made off. And it was not till Tom was proudly looking from the stage box, that he discovered, to his dismay, that his pocket had been picked of sundry pence and halfpence, and that the pin given by Sir Felix, and which he so valued, had been removed from his cravat.

Great was his wrath, and poignant his distress—he wished to rush out and endeavour to recover his lost treasure, but Mr. Temple forbade so Quixotic an expedition; and Sir Felix, who

found tears and groans disturb his enjoyment of Lucilla's presence, promised him another pin, and quietly slipped a sovereign into his hand.

An expressive glance from Sir Felix warned Tom to keep his secret; and Tom, who had never before possessed a sovereign, forgot his losses in the contemplation of his gains, and grew dizzy with delight, as he dwelt on Jock, the pistol, queen-cakes, raspberry tarts, the Wax Work, and even "ices for two," namely, himself and Jock; a little while later, it must be owned, a penknife for his papa (who suffered, as most authors do, a martyrdom from bad pens), a bottle of Eau-de-Cologne for his mamma, and a geranium for Lucilla, were added to the treasures to be purchased with this inexhaustible sovereign, which, in addition to all this, was to be applied to a hundred other purposes, the whole forming a sum total which ten pounds would have barely sufficed to cover.

While Tom is revelling in the pleasures of anticipation, Lucilla is enraptured by one of the

greatest delights of reality—every sense enthralled, and intellect almost sated with enjoyment.

That best of comedies, “The School for Scandal,” with what the initiated call an “unrivalled cast,” might well charm an accustomed play-goer, but it positively entranced the young and intellectual Lucilla.

The delicate and peculiar humour of that fine artist and unrivalled comic actor, Mr. W. Farren, with his powerful conception of character, his minute and brilliant finish, and his gentlemanly and thorough-bred ease, lulled her into a sort of dream, that the whole was a reality. Mr. Charles Mathews, as Charles Surface, won from her that affectionate interest we should actually feel in the candid, witty, brave, and yet reckless young fellow, who was, as the vulgar say, no one’s enemy but his own (as if that could ever be truly said of any one whom, another loved and cared for); and the dashing and brilliant talent of Mrs. Glover (as Mrs. Candour), caused

Lucilla to laugh with so heartfelt a merriment, that, had she not had a silver laugh, and a most graceful manner of laughing, she would have shocked the cold and apathetic beau, accustomed to belles as cold and apathetic as himself. Altogether, Lucilla's delight in this intellectual banquet was so great, that she could not but think with gratitude on him who had procured it to her; and when the curtain fell upon the third act, she turned with beaming eyes and a bright smile to thank Sir Felix again and again for the high and rare delight she had experienced.

"Is it not exquisite? is it not enchanting?" said Lucilla, her heightened colour and her sparkling eyes, testifying to the sincerity of her feelings.

"I know but of one thing either exquisite or enchanting, my charming friend," said Sir Felix, in a low voice; but the play is very tolerably cast, very fairly got up. Had I not been pretty sure of that, it should not have been

honoured by your presence, nor sanctioned by mine."

This speech was meant to be the *se plus ultra* of aristocratic conceit, and proved Sir Felix to be of that false and fast-waning school whose disciples considered enthusiasm about anything, however excellent, as *mauvais ton*, and conceived that a lively sense of merit in another, argued a conviction of inferiority in oneself. These disciples of the cold heart and shallow brain, were seldom known to do more than "damn with faint praise," or indulge in a kind of witless carping at, or sneering disparagement of, those whom they could never hope to approach, their private conviction being, that if one man was raised on a pedestal by any success, he who contrived to appear to despise and look down upon, to sting him and hiss his venom in his ear, might pass for being more exalted and greater still. They did not see that on such a principle a snake might be greater than poet, sage, or hero.

"Very tolerable, indeed! by no means bad;

a very fair performance," continued Sir Felix, elevating his eyebrows, and by gentle and inaudible pattings of his white kid fingers, signifying that he slightly joined in the tumultuous applause of the house. As for Tom, he clapped his boyish hands till they smarted; and Mr. Temple, calm and quiet as he generally was, applauded warmly.

"What is all this row about?" said Sir Felix, "does it not stun you, my fair friend?"

"Oh, no!" said Lucilla, "I should like to join in it; I wish it were tenfold! think what days and nights of toil it must have cost to produce such perfection! what can repay the performers so well, as the sense of the gratitude and delight of the audience?"

"You are a novice, fair friend! that would be poor pay, I fancy, to most of them; but really we, who lounge in and out of public places, till we weary of them, we cannot conceive the enthusiasm of those so very new as yourself! it is *above* us, quite!"

This was said with an air which meant, “ It is *beneath* us quite ; ” and Sir Felix thought nothing so likely to impose upon and exalt him with Lucilla as this sublime apathy.

But he mistook her nature ! she pitied him, looked upon him as an elderly and *passé* beau, to whom everything was “ stale, flat, and unprofitable ; ” a sated and soulless man, languid and inane. Yes, she actually pitied him, when he thought she must almost worship in him an incarnation of that Disdain and Apathy which he conceived to be so truly aristocratic ! At that very moment her heart was sighing for some kindred spirit, some one whose enthusiastic sympathies would answer to her own, some one who could revel with her, in her intellectual joys, share her young delight, kindle and weep with her. “ But he is middle-aged and time-worn,” she thought, as she looked at him : “ poor fellow ! one should try to comfort, rather than condemn him.”

“ By Jove ! there’s Temple Grove in the

opposite box," said Sir Felix, with an interest the best of plays and the first of actors had not been able to awaken in him; he was proof against Sheridan's wit; but the poorest joke of his own could excite him to rapture.

Lucilla looked towards the box he named, and there she saw a tall stout matron and five may-pole daughters, all dressed in bright green, with green feathers in their hair, and the effect produced being certainly that of a summer grove.

They were all singularly alike, having hair varying from so deep a red, that a poet, a mamma, a lover, a lady's maid, or its possessor, would have called it auburn, down to the lightest sandy ever fondly called flaxen; this hair in all, was abundant, and made the most of—French ringlets, frizzed inside, and of great length, standing out a foot from each face: these faces were singularly alike, only some were in their first Hebe bloom, and others told of time, of late hours, and, (greater destroyer still,) of discontent!

All had bright colours, but the younger were indebted solely to nature, the elder sisters to art, for their bloom ; white eye-lashes, large round light eyes, and rather retreating chins, united to form a strong family likeness among this family of fair daughters, called by Sir Felix, from their height and predilection for green, "Temple Grove," their name being, like our friend's and their cousin's, Temple, and the name of their estate "Temple Grove." As for the mamma (Mrs. Temple), the chief difference between her and her fair shoots, was, a green turban, a much stouter figure, a double chin, a ferocious front, and a pair of diagonal eyebrows, pencilled by art ; while a close observer would have perceived traces of pearl powder on her once brilliant complexion, and a daring red on her cheeks, which no eye but her own (used to it for years) could have conceived to be natural.

A small-quiet-looking thin-man might be seen now and then at the back of the box, between

the glaring green plumes of the damsels, and that was Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, a hen-pecked, literary husband, absent and meek, who had inherited an estate he had not fortune to keep up, and had married a resolute, penniless woman, who had him because she had resolved to do so, and who, being determined to sacrifice nothing of outward pomp in her establishment, economized in articles of comfort to a frightful extent.

Two footmen, a coachman, and a butler, were obliged to have the usual number of handsome suits; but Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, seldom boasted of a new coat, and dyeing, turning, and scouring, were arts to which his wife and daughters were much indebted. Indeed, it had been whispered, that Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, had been known to leave her carriage at the corner of one street, and, accompanied by two or three of her tall daughters, privately to proceed to some vendor of ladies' wardrobes in another, there to fit them out at a

small expense, with articles, which, sooth to say, seemed to have lost little, but that first gloss of novelty, the world in all things so overrates. However, with regard to the green satin dresses which had procured them Sir Felix's nickname of Temple Grove, and which for several seasons had been their staple wear at parties, the history was as follows :—

Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, very proud of her five tall, showy daughters, resolved, when the eldest was five-and-twenty, and the youngest seventeen, to introduce them all at Court.

In consequence, a whole piece of the cheapest white satin was bargained for, and bought, of course, at a reduced price.

After the Drawing-room, being remade into ball-dresses, this white satin figured at ball, opera, concert and *soirée*, till it was white no longer.

And then, as all the Temples, of Temple Grove, considered green singularly suited to their bright complexions and showy hair, Mrs. Temple, of

Temple Grove, contracted with a dyer, who for a very moderate sum dyed not merely the dresses, but several of the Court plumes ; and whenever she saw her five tall daughters, looking to her partial eye, like damask roses peeping through green leaves, and put on her own green turban shaded with its drooping green plumes, and her green velvet robes, she congratulated herself upon what she considered the showy and *distingué* nature of this durable colour ; nor did she dream that a spiteful beau, whom she had imprudently excluded from a party at Temple Grove, had, alluding to herself and her elder daughters, given the whole party the odious *soubriquet* of “ The Evergreens.”

As Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, was supreme in her own household, and had a dislike, amounting to horror, of all poverty, especially that of relations, every means had been used by her to dissolve the intimacy which at one time had subsisted between our Lucilla’s father and Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove. To make her

husband dislike, despise, or openly slight, a man whose scholarship he revered, and whose company he delighted in, was impossible ; with *him* nothing could be done to diminish his intimacy with his cousin ; but with our poor, proud, and sensitive Temples, everything could be done, and very little indeed was found to be needed.

A few impertinent questions from Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, as to what Mr. Temple was doing—what Mrs. Temple, Lucilla, and Tom were doing—a few cold looks—a few “Not at homes” from the lady, destroyed what had been an intimacy, nay, almost a friendship, of years in the husband.

But then, for Mr. Temple’s sake, we must observe, that supine, indolent (except in literature), and dreadfully afraid of his energetic wife, his Cousin was sadly misrepresented to him. That Cousin’s natural dignity of manner was described to the husband as an insolent defiance of the wife ; the rude questions were represented as gentle inquiries, made with a view to serving

and assisting; and our Mr. Temple's sending for some books he was in need of, by Tom, who certainly was very fiery, and ready primed to attack and resent, was, with Tom's haughty and rather rude behaviour, construed into a wish to break off all connexion.

Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, constantly intended to write to his Cousin, and ask an explanation of this rupture; but he was, as his wife well knew, a great Procrastinator, and there is no character so completely in the power of the prompt and energetic; and so for two years all intercourse had ceased; and Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, hoped that either "the poor wretches," as she called them, had emigrated, or were sunk so low that they never could meet on any kind of equality again. Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, sometimes exclaimed, "I wonder what is become of Temple? I want to see Temple about that 'Greek Ode;' he promised me a version of it. Wonderful scholar Temple was! I must see about him!"

I must write to him! I will have him dine here!"

On such occasions, Mrs. Temple, his lady, would exchange a furtive smile with the bitterest of her daughters, and there it would end.

Judge, then, of the angry surprise of the "Evergreens" when, at what was considered the "crack" concert of the season, they saw Tom on terms of such familiar friendship with the great "Catch-match," Sir Felix Archer. Spite of two years' growth, well did they remember Tom's abundant spiral curls of bright red, his sharp laughing eyes, and fair but freckled face. Tom, it is true, was wondrously improved, and, spite of this red hair, and these freckles, his aristocratic outline, bright expression, delicate white skin, and large sparkling eyes, with his lithe and slender figure, made him a very striking and showy boy. They writhed—yes, they positively writhed, mother and all, as they saw him whisper in the ear of the great Sir Felix—he, the despised Tom—and that august person posi-

tively smile, nay, almost laugh, at jests which they shrewdly suspected were aimed at them.

Vainly, as we have seen, they smiled and nodded, and tried to conciliate Tom. Tom was hard to conciliate when his parents had been slighted; but all this was nothing to their inward rage, when they saw Lucilla, “into such beauty blown, and sprung so fair,” with Sir Felix so fondly deferential at her side. He might have a fancy for a boy like Tom, but a fancy for a girl like Lucilla was quite another, and a much more serious, thing!

Now, Sir Felix had actually had desperate flirtations with all the belles of Temple Grove in succession, as each made her *début* in the *beau monde*; and when very angry with his nephew, and more than usually eager for an heir, he had passed them all in mental review, sometimes, before he saw Lucilla, dwelling for a few minutes on Hebe, the youngest and handsomest of the family, a fine Rubens-looking girl, but always rejecting her, as not

having sufficient inducements to rouse him from his habitual Sybarite repose; as having too many sisters, a propensity to grow fat, red hair, and a questionable ankle. "Why," thought he, "when so many of more faultless beauty, with no poor connexions, and some fortune, would accept me with delight, why should I fix on Hebe Temple? She is evidently easy-tempered and fond of her sisters, and I doubt not, if I made her Lady Archer, I should have Archer Court, Felix Park, and my house in Portland Place, swarming with her sisters: her elder sisters, too, who will, ere long, be confirmed old maids (my especial aversion). No, no! Hebe Temple will not do." But Hebe Temple was by no means of this opinion; of her *doing* only too well, she had no doubt; and if her heart of two-and-twenty occasionally suggested a doubt whether Sir Felix would do, she looked at her unmarried sisters, her overbearing mamma, her very scanty wardrobe, her very weak tea and

dry toast, her back seat in the old 'blazoned landau—in short, on all her discomforts and privations; and then she thought of the elegant comfort of Sir Felix's house in Town, the varied delights of Felix Park and Archer Court, the costly wardrobe Lady Archer must command, the epicurean table Sir Felix was celebrated for, the dashing equipage, and at last (for she was not all evil), of the pleasure of receiving her sisters, and atoning to them, by their comfort at *her* home, for their misery in their *own*. Poor Hebe! for this last trait we forgive her, much, that was interested and selfish, in her almost passionate desire to captivate Sir Felix Archer; and he actually did contrive to excite an interest in her heart; and in extenuation we may observe, that being rather too candid and wilful to be a favourite with her mamma, she had never enjoyed much of that lady's affections, till the attentions of Sir Felix altered her place in the maternal estimation, and her position in the family.

For this, she felt somewhat too grateful to him, who had only sought his own amusement in his devotion to her. He liked to be the first admirer of any girl; the first blush, the first sigh, the first wistful glance, the first reproachful gaze, the first trembling tear, the first squeeze of the hand, the first flower, nay, even when he could venture so far, the first kiss, were highly valued by this Epicurean in flirtation, as in everything else; "but then, he meant nothing; how could *he* presume to be in earnest —he who had seen her in her cradle! (a mere boy at the time, to be sure), but still *l'ami de la Maison!* papa's old chum &c., &c., &c. His lovely young friend would not be severe on one who had called her his little wife ten years ago!" and so on—thus did Sir Felix escape if any serious motives were imputed to him, and this *had* been done. He had often, by being the first to pour the balmy flatteries in a young girl's thirsty heart, by being the first to make her feel herself of importance, the first to offer

an ornament, a bouquet, a ball ticket, or an Opera-box (aided by a certain dignified tenderness of manner, and gallantry of devotion); he had often, we repeat, excited a vague and tender impulse in a young heart, and raised fond and unacknowledged hopes in both mothers and daughters, only to draw off when the amusement palled, or things looked serious, or a prettier *débutante* appeared elsewhere. And so with poor Hebe; she had been kept back till one-and-twenty for her elder sisters' sakes; and when she came out, Sir Felix was the first person who noticed and courted her.

There was an evident commotion in the Temple Grove box, when Sir Felix Archer was perceived; feathers nodded, eye-glasses were raised and adjusted to anxious eyes, finger tips were kissed; Sir Felix, however, having made one courteous bow, took no more notice of the eager fair ones, but continued to whisper his delicate flatteries into Lucilla's ear, telling her,

in reply to her remarks on the charms and attentions of her fair cousins, that Nature, unjust mother! had lavished on her too-bewitching self, all the beauties, graces, and talents which, even if *shared* among the Misses Temple, of Temple Grove, would have made each irresistible.

In the meantime, those startled and indignant belles were communicating to each other their mutual discovery, that it was no other than that little Lucilla to whom the great Sir Felix was paying such court.

"I did not recognise her at all at first," said Miss Temple, senior; "I really thought she was some one of importance; how wonderfully she is grown and improved."

"Yes, grown!" said Miss Bridget, "but surely not improved; I should say, on the contrary, gone off sadly; she used to be a little insignificant *mignonne*, but, as papa used to say, quite a pocket Venus. Now, she is neither one thing nor the other. Oh! she was much prettier two years ago."

"How oddly her hair is done," said Miss Eleanor, carefully touching her own abundant bunches of frizzed ringlets; "no style at all! so thoroughly English, those long smooth curls; so unlike the French!"

"She is very coquettishly dressed, though!" said Miss Almeria; "and how she is flirting with Sir Felix! I declare its quite disgusting! Oh! as for beauty, now she laughs I think her positively plain; I declare it's quite indecent to laugh in that uncontrolled manner, and all at a play, too! Well, if anything is likely to disgust Sir Felix, that is! Oh! she certainly is sadly gone off."

But poor Hebe who had begun to look upon Sir Felix as her own, and had almost beguiled herself into loving him, she watched her young cousin and the Baronet with a choking sensation in the throat, and eyes which, slowly filling with bitter tears, rather magnified than diminished her rival's charms. Just at this moment, Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove,

whose perceptions were not very acute, suddenly exclaimed, “ By Jove ! that’s Temple, I do believe. Oh ! yes, it is ! it is ! and that exquisite beauty by his side is Lucilla—wonderful !” so saying, he darted out of the box, before Mrs. Temple could exert any art, influence, or authority to detain him ; and, in a minute or two, he was seen affectionately shaking hands with our party, and soon after, settling himself into an earnest classical discussion with his cousin, our Mr. Temple.

“ I shall take care,” said his august lady to her daughters, “ to make your papa feel the impropriety of leaving me and my daughters unprotected in a public place, while he goes dancing attendance on those insolent paupers. I think the men are mad,” she added ; “ there’s Sir Felix Archer continues flirting with that little chit of a Lucilla, though I have bowed two or three times so graciously, that he must see he would be welcome here. How bold that girl must be, to go on flirting in that way.

If I were on terms with her silly thread-bare mother, I should warn her, for Sir Felix can only be making fun of her—he can have no serious intentions, though, I dare say, the little flirt thinks he has."

"I do not see that she is flirting, mamma," said Hebe; "she seems to me very quiet, except when something on the stage amuses her!"

"There are many ways of flirting," said the mamma, "and your quiet flirts are always the deepest; however, flirt or not, she seems to have cut you out with Sir Felix; but I'm sure I hope he won't come here now, for your nose and eyes are so frightfully red! It's quite providential his not coming, I declare, mortifying as it certainly is."

Hebe was glad enough he did not come, for her heart grew fuller, her head heavier, her eyes and nose redder, every moment, with suppressed emotion and jealous disappointment.

If, before, she had only felt a sort of half preference for Sir Felix, jealousy now fanned that preference into love. Oh! how long and dull to her this brilliant performance ! how she writhed beneath her mother's taunts, and shrank from her elder sisters' jeers ; how she longed to be alone in the dark, on her hard mattress in her little attic, where she could relieve her sad disappointed heart by weeping over her ruined hopes. Strange, strange world ! strange mixtures are we all ! who would have believed that a daughter of Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, a handsome young woman of twenty-two, and one not at all indifferent to the substantial advantages that a rich man could confer, was behind the crimson curtain of a private box, shedding large and silent tears of disappointed affection for the wily, artificial, elderly jilt, Sir Felix Archer himself—tears, that the offer of affluence, without him, would not have dried ! Yes, there she tries to check the

frequent sob, shrinking from cold and strange eyes, from the dazzling lights, and, more eagerly still, from the gaze, the surprised, chilling, inquiring, and indignant gaze, of her own mother !

CHAPTER VI.

LITTLE did the inconstant and selfish Sir Felix dream of the storm he had raised, or the interest he had excited ; people seldom trouble themselves much about those passions they do not reciprocate. With Sir Felix, they had been in earlier life the frequent results of his insinuating attentions, and looked upon by him, as gratifying tributes to his charms and his fascinations ; and if they did not interest or engross him much when he was fancy-free, it is no marvel they did not even occur to his mind now that he was—yes, the truth must out (there

is no concealing it)—in love! really in love! in that state of delicious, dreamy, rare, inexpressible entrancement, called being in love! and in love, too—he, doubly a widower, of forty-eight—in love for the first time in his selfish and Sybarite life.

Long had Sir Felix vainly sought some new excitement, some new interest, some new, unexhausted source of enjoyment; and now, though his, to him, novel and extraordinary emotions, were not all of unmixed pleasure, still they seemed to waft him out of this common-place world of satiety, to exchange “the portion of weeds and worn-out faces” for a sort of moonlight dream in melodious fairy-land, of which the young Lucilla was the Titania, the all-engaging and irresistible empress. Now, as love, even in the most vain, egotistical, and self-conceited natures, always comes attended by some doubts, some fears, some misgivings, some undue disparagement of self and exaltation of its object, so even Sir Felix felt a sort of instinct of humility in the presence of Lucilla, a tendency to

underrate his own advantages, and to exaggerate hers. Under this influence, he would sometimes think her youth, her beauty, grace, talent, virgin heart, and boundless faith in the future, above his rank, fortune, position, experience, well-preserved person, and well-matured powers of pleasing; but this was an instinct of love—on reflection old habits of thought and feeling resumed their sway; and then he had no doubt of the preponderance of his own advantages, nor of Lucilla's joyful acceptance, whenever he should deign to propose.

But about this, he was in no great hurry; his present position was so full of novel charms to him, there was something so engrossing, so refreshing to him in this unsated and lover-like state; and a romantic wish to win not merely the maiden's hand but her love, soon awoke in his hitherto selfish heart. It would be so easy for him at any time, when this love became a painful instead of a delicious emotion, to make Lucilla his; but he was not so blinded by pas-

sion as not to know he would by so doing, at the outset curtail his own enjoyment. The courtship over, the pursuit ended, the exciting romance was closed for ever. Lucilla would be a lovely and graceful wife, and that was what it must come to ; and the appearance of a rival, or the acupunctuation of that unsparing fiend, Jealousy, might accelerate matters ; but for the present, Sir Felix wished only to be the welcome, the suspected, but not the acknowledged, not the affianced lover.

“ My dear Temple, do you see Lord Lofty in that box ? ” said Sir Felix, directing our absent friend’s attention to a box, where a middle-aged nobleman, of most distinguished and patrician mien, stood behind a very thin, scraggy, aquiline-featured dowager, and an impassive, haughty-looking young lady, whose proud and perfect features seemed moulded in plaster of Paris, of which the primrose tint not unfitly represented her sodden and sickly complexion ; “ Is he not a cousin of yours, Temple ? ”

"Oh, yes!" exclaimed Tom, "Lord Lofty is papa's first cousin, on his mother's side."

"It is a capital connexion, Temple," said Sir Felix, "and ought to be turned to account."

"It is perfectly useless to me," said Temple, reddening, "Lord Lofty and I have not met for years; he, long ago, after repeated solicitations, promised to do something for me, but it came to nothing; and I believe Lady Lofty and her daughter have taken some offence, or or imagined some; the wolf and the lamb, on all sides it is the same."

"Why I do not wonder that you, my dear Temple, are proud and sensitive with these people; I in your place should be the same; but you must not forget, my dear fellow, that Lowliness is young Ambition's ladder, and for your sweet Lucilla, and dear Tom, you must brave and bear what you would not tolerate for yourself. In the Whigs' day, Lofty was a cipher, a mere cipher, but he is great man now with

the big-wigs ; he has been looking this way a long time, and I almost think he bowed ! Now Lady Lofty and Lady Marcia are, for pride, two she-Lucifers, and I doubt not they would do their best to outwit you ; but I would circumvent them yet, I would, indeed, Temple."

"Alas ! I know not how ; it is always the women who ought to feel most for their poor relations, who most heartlessly drive them away, shrinking from a poor relative as they would from a viper."

"Exactly ; there is nothing so heartless as a heartless woman, and our fashionable life withers the female heart in its bud ; then, too, they are very jealous of appearances, and can see no merit in a threadbare coat and napless hat, but Lofty himself has heart and mind. Now, see he bows ; he is a great connoisseur in beauty, and he has been perusing Lucilla's face till he is obliged to own it faultless ! Do, dear Temple, do go to his box."

"Never, never," said Mr. Temple, red-

dening, and with flashing eyes ; “ not if a good living to-morrow were to be the result, would I so sacrifice my dignity as his fellow-man and cousin. What think you, when, urged by his promises and the hopes he held out, I went several times to his house, and waited with other applicants in his ante-room, on one occasion that I called in the afternoon, a powdered menial, my Lady’s footman, came to me, and said that his Lordship never saw people on business after one o’clock ?

“ ‘ Were you told to say this ? ’ said I.

“ ‘ Yes, such are my orders.’

“ ‘ Then,’ said I, ‘ tell his Lordship that his cousin, Mr. Temple, has called for the last time.’

“ The powdered puppy looked thunderstruck ; he was a new comer ; hurried out several apologies, in which my Lady was the predominant word ; begged I would wait while he went to my Lord, and so on ; but I reached the inhospitable door of Lofty House, and passing out, I have never entered it again.”

" I cannot but blame you ; do you not see it was all a *ruse* of Lady Lofty's to get rid of you ! and that you play into her hands ? do go, Temple, it is due to his Lordship's rank ; and your children's welfare, as well as your own, may be at stake."

Mr. Temple would not stir. Meantime some discussion took place in Lord Lofty's box. " I declare," said his Lordship, " I do think that is Temple ; look my dear, is it, or is it not ? "

" Why really," said her Ladyship, " it is a matter of so little importance, I wonder you take the trouble to inquire ; but since you ask my opinion, I believe it is that ill-bred and disagreeable man. I suppose that is his daughter."

" Oh, yes, that lovely little girl who was with them at Dartmoor ; don't you remember her, with long gold curls down to her waist ? She, I doubt not, is grown up into that very beautiful young woman."

" A very plebeian-looking person, I think,"

drawled Lady Marcia; “ I wonder Sir Felix Archer, who has some taste and some fashionable importance, should associate with such an unformed, milk-maid kind of person.”

The Loftys were poor, and Lady Marcia had sometimes thought of the rich Sir Felix for her august self; particularly as, though a belle of many seasons, she had as yet made no important conquest.

“ Oh,” said Lord Lofty, “ Archer’s evidently in love with her, and no wonder; she’s the prettiest person I have seen this season. I hope Archer will propose; and if he does, I might get his vote and influence. I have often thought, Lady Lofty, we did not behave well to the Temples; they are my cousins, you know.”

“ They are very impertinent people,” said her Ladyship; “ more than once, when that person officiated at Dartmoor, if I was late I found the service had commenced; I gave him several hints, which he never took; at last, in Town, I gave him one he did take.”

"Do you mean," said Lord Lofty calmly, "that you had any hand in getting rid of him?"

"I do; you may thank me for it. I sent my footman (when he came boring one day, actually in the afternoon) to say your Lordship never saw people on business after one o'clock. The fellow, being an incarnation of pride and poverty, went off in high wrath, and you may thank me that you were rid of his impertinent solicitations."

"What tact and talent you showed, mamma," said Lady Marcia. "I cannot endure such people."

"You have taken an unwarrantable and inexcusable liberty, Aurora," said Lord Lofty; giving way to his suppressed emotion, his eyes flashing, and his cheek pale with rage; "an insult to my cousin is one to me. It remains for me to make the best atonement I can. If I can induce Temple to visit us again, let me beg you, Lady Lofty to be very kind to him; and you, Marcia, you *must* learn to endure my

relatives, or to endure going down into Yorkshire next week with the housekeeper."

So saying, Lord Lofty left the box; his general demeanour was so very calm and courteous, that his wife and daughter were not a little startled at this angry and resolute resistance of their influence; a little titter of scorn and defiance escaped them, when he was quite out of hearing, and Lady Lofty murmured—"He may bring those insolent beggars to my house and my table, and he may compel me to receive them with apparent courtesy, and you, my sweet Marcia, to degrade yourself by associating with them, but he can never make me their friend, nor you either, I should think, my love; and if I have any power, they will gain nothing but the empty honour of sitting unwelcome guests at my table, and be exposed besides to an enmity which this injudicious behaviour of your father's, will change from passive into active. No people shall be forced upon my darling

and me with impunity, and that they will discover when too late."

"I hope they may, mamma," sneered Lady Marcia; "papa is so absurd about Sir Felix proposing to Miss Temple, because he sees him flirting with her a little. Such nonsense! I believe he is not a marrying man, and that nothing but the union of beauty, rank, and talent, would make him wish to be one;" at this moment both the ladies crimsoned with wrath, for, just as they were speaking, and just as Sir Felix, on his side, was urging Mr. Temple to go and pay his respects to Lord Lofty, a request in which Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, joined, the door of our Temples' box opened, and the shining, bald, aristocratic head of Lord Lofty bowed to them all, and the next moment he was warmly shaking hands with Mr. Temple, calling him his dear cousin, and reproaching him with ceasing to visit him, and keeping him in ignorance as to his abode.

Mr. Temple's stiffness and resentment wore away before Lord Lofty's endearing familiarity, his evident admiration of Lucilla, and his cordial notice of Tom, whose pride and joy were boundless, at being actually in the presence of that great Lord, of whom he had so often boasted to Jock, without any distinct or positive knowledge of his existence. Yes, Lord Lofty was gracious to all; but it was evident to Sir Felix that neither to his wealthy self, nor to Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, was his manner half so earnest and warmly cordial as to our poor friend.

Sir Felix began to look forward. With Lofty's interest, Temple might yet rise; Lucilla might be seen and courted by men of higher rank than himself, and fewer years. He would be on the watch, and if he saw any symptoms of such a result, he would propose at once, and marry her before her head was turned, as it would surely be, if once admitted into the *beau monde*.

"Come and breakfast with me, Temple," said Lord Lofty, "and we will talk over your affairs; perhaps I may be able to help you, now. Let's see, this is Tuesday—will Friday suit you?"

The hectic of Hope mantled Mr. Temple's cheek as he accepted the invitation; and shortly after, Lord Lofty left the box.

"Your fortune's made, Temple!" said Sir Felix, grasping his hand.

"God grant it may be, dear cousin!" said Mr. Temple, of Temple Grove, with a tear in his eye.

"Perhaps," whispered Tom to Lucilla, "Lord Lofty can get papa made a Bishop, or an Archdeacon, or some great thing."

"Oh!" returned Lucilla, "if he only gave him a pretty little vicarage, and a small living, I should be wild with gratitude and joy. How I long to get home, to tell dear mamma!"

"Do tell Miss Trueblue," said Tom; "she

so sneered when I said Lord Lofty was papa's cousin."

"I think we had better wait till we see what he does for papa."

"Oh, no, that's just like you! I shall go with you to-morrow, and tell her myself."

"And if nothing comes of it?"

"Nothing comes of Lord Lofty's asking papa to breakfast, and saying all he did to him about doing something for him! I like that; I only wish you were a boy, I'd thrash you! As it is, I can hardly keep my hands off you, and I will pay you out some of these days, miss."

"Hush, Tom," said Sir Felix, "you disturb people; let me return to my place—you can always have your sister's company."

"Yes, too often, by half," muttered Tom; and he retired to the back of the box, privately to revel in some bulls'-eyes and lollipops with which he had provided himself.

While Mr. Temple is brooding over his new

hopes, his cousin of Temple Grove, who has returned to his own box, is undergoing the sharpest reprimands and cross-examinations of his lady and several of her daughters, whose wrath and envy were increased ten-fold, when they saw Lord Lofty, who always shunned them, actually entering their poor relations' box.

So little could Mrs. Temple, of Temple Grove, elicit from her frightened and absent husband, that she determined to find out the Temples' abode, and calling, as if from motives of friendship, ascertain whether any change of a beneficial kind had taken place in their circumstances, as she was a person who always trimmed her sails according to the wind. The performances of the evening were at an end, and our party rose to depart.

Lucilla had been seated during the evening, with her back turned to a box in which were a rather noisy set of young men, and more than once she had felt the mantle on which

she leaned, and even her arm, touched, as she believed, inadvertently ; now, as she stood for a moment collecting her fan, her handkerchief, and her bouquet, she unintentionally glanced for a moment into this box, and an indescribable thrill passed through her, and her cheek paled ; for, with his eyes fixed intently on her, and with a smile of familiar recognition on his face, she beheld Lord Trellawney, that strange and alarming person, of whom she felt an instinctive dread, increased tenfold by Miss Trueblue's account of his character and conduct.

He was surrounded by men of elegant exterior, but insolent and dissipated expression ; and Lucilla, trying to appear not to see his Lordship, turned abruptly round, and took up her cloak, which hung over the edge of the box ; as she did so, she became aware that a note was pinned into the lining. Her first impulse was to point this out to her father and Sir Felix, but luckily, her woman instinct

and tact came to her aid, and her exclamation died on her lips. What if this daring, insolent, and lawless man, had addressed some communication to her, and taken this detestable means of compelling her to receive it in silence? what dreadful results might ensue upon its exposure? what publicity, what commotion, what disgrace! Her father might not be able to restrain his just indignation, a personal conflict might ensue! Lucilla shuddered, as she thought, in one brief but wretched moment, of all that might happen; and hastily putting on her cloak, she determined to let the paper remain where it was, pinned in the folds of the lining, till she had an opportunity of removing it unnoticed. As, leaning on Sir Felix's arm, she hurried down the crowded stairs, she felt some one pluck her sleeve, and thinking it was Tom, she looked round, but to encounter with a shudder the bold and cunning eyes of Lord Trelawney; who, almost hissing in her ear the word " Beware," hur-

ried past her, leaning on the arm of some laughing fashionable, and thus inducing poor Lucilla to cling close to Sir Felix, whose vanity sadly misconstrued her trembling and yet tightened grasp.

CHAPTER VII.

LUCILLA was still pale and trembling at the horrible idea of being engaged in any sort of clandestine correspondence with Lord Trelawney, and the still more frightful dread of the consequences of revealing to her father the position in which she was, when handed up stairs, with proud and tender courtesy by Sir Felix Archer, she suddenly found herself in the full blaze of his brilliantly-lighted drawing-rooms. They were a minute or two in advance of Mr. Temple and Tom, and Sir Felix hastily led Lucilla through the rooms; when they came into the farthest

and were out of hearing of the footman, Sir Felix gazed at her for a moment as she stood before him, trembling and pale, her long golden hair, half-uncurled by the night air, falling on her exquisite shoulders and snowy neck ; and thinking that her altered manner was attributable to a feeling most flattering to him, he caught her unwilling hand and pressed it to his lips, and exclaiming—" Listen to me, sweetest one," he was about to pour forth his feelings in a passionate declaration, when Tom, who had followed them on tiptoe, suddenly rushed in between, them shouting—" Bo ! don't you think to make love to Sir Felix, Miss Sly, without my finding you out."

Sir Felix, though at first much provoked, was reconciled when he remembered that he was on the eve of committing an irremediable imprudence, and of putting his fate out of his own power. After a moment's confusion, he laughed off the affair as a joke ; and Lucilla, who thought little of it except as a piece of silly gallantry,

which awoke no feeling in her heart but one of annoyance, was intent upon so folding up her cloak that the dreaded note might escape all eyes but her own, and indeed during the whole evening this detestable charge occupied her mind. Although Sir Felix had not made up his mind to offer to place Lucilla at the head of his establishment, it is certain he was very anxious, by showing it off to the greatest advantage, to make her covet the honour of presiding over it.

A more elegant and tasteful *petit souper* could not have been devised, had he, instead of the portionless daughter of “poor Temple,” expected a Princess of the Blood Royal to sit at his board. He was in the most delightful spirits, and a mixture of tender deference might be seen to soften the habitual courtesy of his manners. Mr. Temple was cheered by this brief return to that style of life to which he had been born. Tom was wild with joy, and, under the influence of the champagne, he privately poured into

his glass, while his father was wrapt in pleasing thought, he became very talkative and rather saucy, but Sir Felix was in no mood to take offence ; and indeed, much of Tom's conversation was lost, as he "drank in the silence of *Lucilla's* beauty."

Lucilla herself, young and impressionable, could not be insensible to the novel and delightful luxuries of Sir Felix's house and table. It certainly did occur to her how agreeable it would be always to be waited upon by such diplomatic and courtly footmen—always to be surrounded by such pictures, such statues, such plants, and such a mixture of elegance and comfort ; always to see her father so happy, and Tom so delighted. And this Sir Felix had hoped she would feel, but he had not anticipated the thought that mingled with this longing, namely, that another than his august self should at once share and double these delights. Oh ! could he have dreamt of such a result, how would his smooth eyebrows have been elevated,

his benign lip contracted, his admiring eyes have flashed with jealous wrath, and his graceful courtesy have changed into vindictive malice and repelling *hauteur*.

But if there is an arch-enchanter who, in the middle age, supplies the place of poetry and passion, which make a fairy land for the young even in this wilderness of life, it is SELF-LOVE. Touched by his wand, Lucilla's pale cheek, thoughtful eyes, abstracted manner, and soft voice, all contribute to a dear delusion, which makes Sir Felix feel himself almost a God. And often in the exhilarating delight of that hour he was tempted to sacrifice prudence, and proclaim himself Lucilla's lover, but as often a thousand selfish motives interfered and saved him, not as he imagined, from a delighted acceptance, but from a decided and mortifying rejection.

It was just as the Temples were about to depart, at about three o'clock in the morning, for the little shabby house, which must seem doubly

shabby and distasteful after so much elegance and splendour, that while showing Lucilla a curious antique on a reading-table, Sir Felix saw a copy of the magazine, and with it a note in the hand of Lucilla Undermine. He smiled, and opened the note. "Poor girl!" he said, "I must call on her; she is partial, certainly; but evidently my poor Essay has struck her fancy, and convinced her judgment. Will you oblige me by reading this aloud?"

" DEAR AND ADMIREDFRIEND.

" I send you the——Magazine. You will find the first article, which is from my pen, to be a poor attempt to do some little justice to your sublime Essay. I fear it is not in my best style, for I am, alas! at once bewildered and disheartened by my recent close contact with your dazzling genius; my mental vision is affected, as my bodily one might be by a long scrutiny of the sun. There are some of your exquisite and original thoughts I wish to discuss with

you, some of your grandest conceptions I want you to help me to analyze, and here and there, a comet-like thought you must assist me to contemplate. I have several other notices *en main*, but I must see you about them; I shall be alone and disengaged to-morrow, if you will honour me by a call, any hour you please. Patiently as the Chaldean of old might have watched the dawn of a new planet, will I await your approach, most gifted of the sons of men!

“LUCILLA.”

It was wise in Sir Felix to cause Miss Temple to read this absurd note aloud, as, had he done so himself, it would have been trebly ludicrous; as it was, Lucilla by a cough disguised her irresistible merriment, and Sir Felix was luckily so fascinated by the rhapsodical eulogy, of his Essay, contained in the —— Magazine, that she had time to recover her composure before she again attracted his notice.

To see himself thus praised and almost dei-

fied in print, was to him as new as it was fascinating.

He was quite unacquainted with the machinery and *dessous de cartes* of publishing. He had therefore used no influence and exercised no arts to get puffed and praised into notice. He had had his *Essay* printed at his own expense, by an unenterprising publisher, who, aware that it had neither originality nor talent, thought the less it was brought forward the better; he did not like to refuse the job, but he was a little ashamed of it, and the result was, that it fell still-born from the press. Among the underlings of authorship, and the hacks on the literary high-road, Sir Felix had no acquaintance; of course, the higher reviewers were not likely to notice an *Essay* in which they saw no merit, and which was not published by the proprietor of the periodicals they edited, nor written by one of their personal friends; and so, entirely through mismanagement, and want of experience, the “*Essay on Taste*,” though

written by a rich Baronet, was as dead a failure as if it had been written by some poor scholar who paid for his hobby by incarceration at his printers' suit. Now, though the "Essay" was bad, meager, borrowed, and pedantic, many much worse, have by judicious management, been puffed into celebrity, advertised till people in sheer weariness felt compelled to take what was ever so obtrusively and constantly offered, and an ephemeral reputation had been purchased at a tolerably high price. But though he would not have grudged the price, Sir Felix had never been put in the way of making the purchase, and therefore he considered himself an ill-treated author, an unrecognised, unappreciated genius, a step-son of the Muses; therefore the puffs and praises of others filled him with envy, and a bitter sense of slight and wrong rankled in his heart; and therefore, like oil into a wound, or balm upon an irritated spirit, came the *printed* and enthusiastic eulogies of Lucilla Undermine's daring pen. Roundly

she rated and abused what she called “a supine and venal press,” for its neglect of that genius, which, to all its other celestial attributes, added that divine and roseate modesty, which, like an attendant spirit, betrays the presence of the God! then followed an erudite, and by no means contemptible, list of those sons of Fame, who, entitled at their very birth to a heritage, had to conquer where they ought only to have claimed, and often only received after death those honours which should have gladdened their lives. Then came an analysis of the “Essay,” and a view of its scope and its design, which Sir Felix himself marvelled as he read, to find so extensive and so sublime; then judicious and somewhat sparing extract, with an artful suggestion, that to lavish more, would be to reward an ungrateful and niggard public, but that the fountain was open to all; they had only to drink and be wise. The whole was wound up by a personal sketch of the great author of so great an “Essay;” and so touchingly was

this mighty son of Plutus and the Muse brought before the public, so boundless was his philanthropy represented to be, so simple his nature, so earnest his love of science, so sublime his devotion to study, and so simple and endearing his character as a man, that the tearless eyes of Sir Felix moistened for the second time for many a year; and as Lucilla (not without emotion, for the tribute *was* eloquent. Sir Felix had been kind as a friend, and unsuccessful as an author, and she was young and impressionable) read the grand final tribute to his great and unacknowledged genius, his silent merits, and his patient wrongs, he was obliged to bury his face in his handkerchief to conceal his emotion.

It was some little time before he quite recovered his graceful calm, and then he said to Lucilla, "It is sweet to be appreciated, although reprieve of an unjust sentence, namely, neglect, which to an author is *death*, may upset the strongest nerves for a moment. Tom, I see,

is asleep, and your father deep in that book of Historical Autographs ; this being the case, I must beg your patience for a moment, while I read you the note I wrote to that gifted girl, in return for her first flattering tribute," so saying, Sir Felix took out of a writing-case a formal copy of his production.

The style was somewhat stiff, and so was the writing, and Lucilla could not but smile, when she contrasted its pompous condescension, and inflated common-place, with the almost insane rhapsody which had called it forth.

" MY DEAR MADAM,

" I take this opportunity of expressing my sense of the honour you have done me, and the confidence you have shown in my discretion—an honour which, I beg to say, I fully appreciate, and a confidence, which allow me to add, you will not find misplaced. Permit me to state, in reply to your flattering proposal, that our acquaintance should assume the more lively garb of friendship (this last sentence, Sir Felix

read with peculiar emphasis, as if convinced it was at once figurative and fine)—permit me, I say, to state in reply, that to a lady of your discernment, I shall be proud to pay the tribute of a lasting friendship, and a well-won regard. Allow me to add, that I beg you will accept the accompanying copy of my ‘Essay on Taste,’ as a small token of my consideration and esteem. In conclusion, let me say, that although circumstances over which I have no control (here he looked up, as if this were very bright) may compel me to postpone the pleasure of waiting on you, I will yet take an early opportunity of paying my respects in person to my fair critic. And with compliments to your circle, and renewed acknowledgments for the high opinion you have been pleased to form of my poor talents,

“ I am, dear madam, with a high sense of your merits, and best wishes for your welfare,

“ Your obliged and obedient,

“ FELIX ARCHER.”

There were very few things Lucilla could have said, which would at all have satisfied the omnivorous vanity of Sir Felix, or have appeared to him as a just need of praise, for a composition which, he considered as unequalled in epistolary *chef-d'œuvres*.

He was about to propose to her to read her some other letters of his own on different subjects, of all of which he had copies, neatly written, dated, and stitched into separate covers, but Lucilla's quick eye caught the dimensions of one he was about to commence upon, and wearied past endurance with a prosing egotism of which she had to bear the whole brunt, she said—"I must deny myself this pleasure, Sir Felix, for poor mamma will be watching for our return so anxiously, and she is still so delicate!"

"Mrs. Temple will feel sure you are enjoying yourself, my sweet friend," said Sir Felix, taking up the dreaded paper.

"And your horses?" said Lucilla.

"True, they are waiting all this time in the

cold night air, and one has recently had a tendency to a cough. Ever considerate and self-denying," said Sir Felix, gently pressing her hand, "how charming does such forethought and unselfish conduct make you appear, to one accustomed to those reckless women of rank and fashion, who, to gratify themselves, would sacrifice the finest horses in my stud. Come, Tom, my boy! your sister will not be detained."

Now that his horses were fairly brought before his mind, Sir Felix was as eager to speed his guests as he had been to detain them.

"Have you looked over my poems," said poor Lucilla, anxiously, as he handed her down stairs, not having had courage before to ask the egotist what he thought of her beautiful effusions.

"Scarcely, my dear Miss Temple; certainly not sufficiently to give you a valuable opinion; but I see at once, that though you have talent, you want 'the handling,' as we say of painters; the conception is very fair, but the versification

often careless. However, I will not disappoint you—you shall have an opinion which you may find profitable. A running commentary of mine may be of great use to you. You have much to do."

"Then," faltered Lucilla, "in the present state of the poem, you do not think it available for publication?"

"By no manner of means. I doubt, now I have your writings before me, whether they *would* do for the public; however, cultivate them to the utmost—they will enrich your conversation, and serve to adorn private life."

"But you gave me hopes, Sir Felix."

"Then Sir Felix was rash and premature, fair friend; at least so it seems to him now; but I will go over the lines, and, as I said before, give you a full commentary on them; but much as I admire them, I feel sure they are not suited for publication. *Au revoir*, fair friend! God bless you, Temple! Good-by, Tom, my boy! Remember, Wednesday! Salute Mrs. Temple

for me! Why, positively, the sun is rising, fair Lucilla, just as to me it seems to set! Farewell!"

"Good night," faintly murmured Lucilla, as she sank back in the carriage, and a feeling of dislike and impatient scorn of Sir Felix mingled itself with the bitter disappointment of all her hopes connected with her poems.

She remembered the complacency with which he dwelt on his own praises, the silent rapture with which he revelled in his own prosaic common-place, and a feeling of resentment and derision swelled her bosom, as the large tears filled her eyes. "I will hear what Di Moricini thinks of that poem," she said to herself, "he is a man of genius. That cold pretender! how should he appreciate poetry—he whose very prose is made up of old copy-book sentences. I am afraid if I see much of him I shall quite hate him. And with his conceit, toleration will pass for encouragement. At any rate, he will not help me forward in the world

of letters. I wonder whether Di Moricini has any influence in the literary world?"

But the carriage stopped at the humble home of the Temples, and woke Tom out of his sleep, and Lucilla and Mr. Temple, the former out of a mournful, the latter a delightful, reverie.

CHAPTER VIII.

WHILE Mr. Temple hastened to the room of his watchful and anxious wife, to re-kindle from the newly-lighted lamp of Hope in his own heart, the half-extinguished glimmer in hers—in other words, to communicate to her the boundless and well-founded expectations Lord Lofty's conversation and invitation had given rise to, Tom stumbled, half-asleep, into his attic, and Lucilla hurried into her own little room. The sun was now fairly rising—the East was gay with rose and amber clouds, and the rest of the sky looked cold and gray. It

was a chill and comfortless light that came into Lucilla's room, where, as Norah was no lady's maid, and had enough to do in her own department, everything remained in the confusion in which Lucilla had left it, when she had hastily dressed herself.

Drawers in disorder and half-open, boxes scattered about, her little toilet-table (generally so neat) all in confusion, gloves here, slippers there, artificial flowers and bows strewing the bed, and the morning sun beginning to peep in and light up and laugh at all this discomfort and disorder.

Now Lucilla was by habit and nature very neat, and what in old times was called notable and tidy, and this chaos of confusion added not a little to the sense of desolation, discomfort, and depression, which weighed upon her spirits.

The great exhilaration and delight she had felt at the Theatre naturally brought a reaction, and produced feelings of weariness and gloom,

but everything tended to confirm and increase this depression.

She looked round the little room, and the Present seemed a dreary chaos—the Past all pain—the Future all fear, doubt, and danger. Even the thought of Lord Lofty was tinged with the dread and hopelessness of her spirit, and she could not believe that any good could really await her fallen and fated family.

Of Sir Felix she thought with a distaste, which was fast growing into aversion. Of Lord Trellawney, with an angry terror and resentment at the unjustifiable annoyance he caused her, and which a complication of feelings and circumstances seemed to compel her to bear in silence, and thus almost to seem to connive at. On Di Moricini she dwelt with a tender regret, which, when she thought of her parents, and their deep disappointment (should she form a preference for a foreign and penniless artist), was almost a foretaste of remorse!

And all this time she has done nothing with

the dreaded paper, which continues pinned inside the cloak, which has fallen around her.

She looked into the little oval glass which had so often reflected her smooth and Hebe face ; she started, so wan, so cold, so worn did she seem to herself. “ I am quite a model for a picture of Desolation,” she thought, as she looked on her long hair, quite uncurled, the troubled expression of her heavy eyes, the coldness and ruefulness of her whole expression. “ Habitual discontent would soon make me look old and ugly,” she murmured, with a youthful *naïvète* peculiarly her own. “ And after all, what have I to complain of so bitterly ? Are not my parents spared me ? Do they not love me ? Am I not enabled to comfort and assist them ? Did not the God of Mercy’s hand seem almost visibly outstretched to guide me, where I should be able to turn my talents to account in their dear service ? Have I not health, youth, powers of mind, and, in the opinions of some, charms of person ? Have I not dear, tormenting,

but beloved Tom ? Oh, I am most ungrateful ! I have never lost one dear one ! Never known, what my heart foretells me must be the irremediable, the unbearable grief. Then up, thou thankless one ! I ought to dance for gratitude and joy, not droop in weak and futile anguish, that a few trials are sent to try of what materials I am made ! A few minutes will make this den of disorder the neat and maiden bower it is wont to be. *Allons courage !*"

So saying, the ready-handed girl set seriously to work, and in half an hour no chamber of innocence and beauty, though it might look costlier, was more pleasing to the eye.

She then arranged and bound up her matchless tresses, bathed her face and hands, closed her shutters, refreshed her soul with prayer, and was about to seek her pillow, when the thought of the odious billet haunted her ; at first, she had resolved not to read it, but female curiosity prevailed : sophistry persuaded her it was expedient, nay, necessary to do so, and

snatching it from a drawer, where she had put it, she read, (written in pencil) :

“ Haymarket.

“ I knew you would be here to night, and I was impatient to see you again. Your beauty surpasses my expectations, now the envious bonnet and shawl are gone ! What coldness in man, and injustice in fate, that such a creature should be doomed to wear out the rosy hours of her brilliant youth, as daily teacher to a clothier’s daughter. You see I know your story. I presume, the staid old bird behind you is your governor. Shame on him, to let such a daughter wear herself out, in the degrading and thankless task of teaching. Sir Felix Archer I know, by report and sight; beware of him ! he is a notorious jilt ! I hope soon to see you, when I can tell you more fully of my plans and feelings. Do not betray this confidence ; you cannot defeat me, but may bring ruin, and even bloodshed into your family, by any want of discretion. Be silent, and happiness awaits you.

“ Yours, as you make me.”

Poor Lucilla! timid and inexperienced, she trembled as she read this bold and mysterious communication. It was written very closely, and the longer she dwelt on it, the more mystified, alarmed, and bewildered did she feel. How had this man learnt her private history? How ascertained what she so wished hidden from all the world—her occupation at Miss Trueblue's? How found out that she was going to the Haymarket that very night? She would tell her father—yes, she was resolved. But, no; ruin and bloodshed, this mysterious and evidently powerful man told her would be the result! and if that were but a threat used to alarm her, still she well knew that directly her parents heard of this affair, their peace would be gone. All assistance for them, through her attendance on Miss Trueblue, would be at an end. Her mother would never let her leave her side. Perhaps her father would seek out this insolent and bold man, and then who could foresee the result? No, she would

consult Miss Trueblue, and her alone. And so saying, she closed her shutters, and in spite of the many perils and distresses that surrounded her, the sweet sleep of seventeen soon stole over her wearied spirit; nor did she awake till the broad sun and Norah's broad face peeped in at once, and the Irish maid rousing her by her merry laugh, exclaimed—

“ Faith, then, Miss Lucilla, it's yourself is wanted below to make the tay! and I'd have rung the bell long ago, to rouse ye up, if I hadn't thought you'd have done it yerself; but make haste, a cuishla! for the masther has had the pin in his hand this hour, and done a sight o'writin', and the mistress is getting up to breakfast wid ye the morn, and lukes for all the world as fresh as a rose!”

Lucilla needed no more: her poor father already at his work, her mother actually getting up to breakfast, for the first time since her dreadful illness! Rapidly Lucilla made her neat and simple toilette, and was in the

parlour with the tea made, when Mr. Temple led in, with a sort of triumphant courtesy, his fond and beloved wife. Lucilla darted forward to embrace and welcome them; she saw that her father, though pale and worn, was full of hope; and as for her mother, her eyes sparkled, her cheeks were flushed, and her whole appearance betokened a feverish kind of joy. Lucilla knew full well that to Lord Lofty all this exhilaration was owing, and she shuddered to think what would be the result of that disappointment which her less sanguine nature taught her to believe was not quite impossible. At first, as if by mutual and tacit consent, the subject of these new hopes was avoided, but by degrees they began to give utterance to those thoughts of which their hearts were full.

“ This tea is not very good, my love,” said Mrs. Temple.

“ Nothing very cheap can be very good, my darling,” said her husband, “ and our dear

Lucilla does her best to keep our house-keeping within the narrow limits we prescribed; but I hope the time is fast approaching, when we shall be able to give her a little more scope, and then we shall see a very different result."

" You think, dearest," said Mrs. Temple, " from Lord Lofty's manner, that he must have something immediate in view for you."

" Yes, I certainly understand so; either some appointment, or a living."

" A living in some lovely country is what I pine for," said Mrs. Temple. " Oh! to look out on hills and woods, to breathe the pure balmy air, to see the ruddy children of the poor peasantry, instead of the squalid offspring of Want and Vice; the very picture revives my spirit."

" God grant it may soon be realized," said Temple, fondly pressing her feverish hand; " and then, if other anticipations prove founded—eh, Lucilla, little blushing rogue!—we may indeed hold up our heads."

Lucilla did indeed blush, but earnestly declared she blushed without a cause, as no anticipations connected with her had any foundation.

"Of course not," said her father, guided by a look from his wife.

And here Tom came in, and having heard Lord Lofty's remarks to his father, and being himself of the most sanguine of tempers, he proceeded to enlarge on their brilliant prospects, to build episcopal palaces in the air, to foretel all that could delight and comfort, and, even though his parents knew how much of what he said, sprung from ignorance and inexperience, they listened with pleasure, and were beguiled the while.

Fain would they have induced Lucilla to send an excuse for that day, at least, to Miss Trueblue, and spend it with them, in delightful anticipations; but, besides that, Lucilla saw no justifiable excuse for such a step; she had her own private reasons for wishing to consult

Miss Trueblue ; and, much against Tom's wish, she insisted on his escorting her there. Tom had a very important object in view, in which Jock was the only coadjutor he required ; and he was so angry with his sister for delaying this object, that he said—

“ Papa, I assure you Lucilla is so mean, that when you are a Bishop, if you don't prevent her, she'll still go out to teach Miss Trueblue.”

“ Then she shall go in a mitred carriage, my boy,” said Mr. Temple, rubbing his hands, “ for whatever Lucilla wishes to do, I shall be quite sure is ‘ wisest, virtuousest, discreetest, best.’ ”

Lucilla felt a strong inclination to deserve this praise better by telling her father of Lord Trelawney's conduct and communication ; but she could not bear to damp his rare and delightful mirth, and the threatened result held her back.

Taking the arm of the unwilling Tom, she hastened to set out, leaving her father and mother to discuss their brightened prospects,

and to feed each others' hopes. Under the influence of her newly-awakened anticipations of peace and competence, Mrs. Temple was enabled to take a walk, leaning on her husband's arm. He led to the Regent's Park, where the air, the scene, the trees, the water, everything filled her heart with hope and peace; and not even in the blissful period of their imprudent courtship, the stealthy walks of unutterable bliss, had they clung more fondly to each other, or looked forward with a happier confidence than now, though Mr. Temple is obliged to sustain his wife's tottering steps, and often to make her rest on the benches they pass, and though all who see her, look with pity on her wan and wasted cheek, and prophesy, inwardly or to each other, that she is not long for this world of care.

We must leave them for a while sitting fondly together under the shady trees, going over and over again all Lord Lofty had said. and hasten

to inquire why Sir Felix Archer's carriage stands so long, and at so early an hour, before the private residence of Mr. Undermine, in Bedford Row.

CHAPTER IX.

GREAT had been the commotion produced at the Undermines' by a note from Sir Felix Archer to Miss Lucilla Undermine, which arrived there at about eleven a.m., and signified, in language pompously condescending, that if perfectly convenient, he would have the honour of waiting on her in the course of an hour; adding, that he wished to thank her in person for her matchless criticisms on his "Essay on Taste," and to consult her on many important matters.

Now Lucilla Undermine possessed a very

prominent and well-developed organ of Secretiveness, and it required all her sisters' organs of Causality and Acquisitiveness to obtain any idea, in a general way, of what Lucilla was about.

Her rhapsodical epistles to Sir Felix, and her critique in the —— Magazine, she had kept to herself; so that when she read aloud this note, it was universally considered that the lucky girl had made an impression on the wealthy Baronet, and that he was feeling the way to making her a proposal.

“As to all *that* about critiques and Essays,” said Mrs. Undermine, “I consider it a mere blind, but I can see with half an eye what he’s after; however, we had better seem to suspect nothing—you girls and myself will set off to walk to Highgate, then *we* shall be out of the way; and as you, Lucilla, cannot take a walk before Sir Felix comes, I advise you to have the cold bath again, to strengthen your intellects and freshen your beauty.”

"I have had the cold bath once, mamma."

"Once may do for ordinary, but not for extraordinary, occasions," said the mother; "you have just time for it, and you really do not look at all yourself."

The daughter yielded, for she saw her cheek *was* pale, and she felt some kind of nervous anxiety and misgiving, when her eldest sister sneeringly said—"And if you become Lady Archer, what is to be done with Mr. Rory O'Brien? I suppose you don't expect to keep them both to yourself."

"You are welcome to him *if you can get him*," was the reply of the lip, but unconfirmed by Lucilla Undermine's heart; for whatever preference she was capable of feeling, she felt for this hotheaded, clever, eloquent, boasting, romancing, and intriguing Irish barrister. And though she *could* bear to think of giving him up for title, wealth, and position, she could not calmly contemplate his belonging to any one else, and, least of all, to her sister, between

whom and herself there had always been a spirit of rivalry and dislike.

“Why did you remind her of that briefless barrister, who’ll never earn ‘salt to his porridge,’” said Mrs. Undermine, angrily, to her eldest daughter, as they strode to Highgate; “didn’t you see she changed colour? She has a sneaking kindness for that ‘beggar on horseback,’ who’ll ride to we know who, and that soon. All who care for her should try to put a stop to that dangerous intimacy; and I’m sure, even if Sir Felix were not the great match he is, I should rejoice to see her engaged to him, or to any honest man with a competency.”

“If you so dislike Rory O’Brien, why have you not forbade him the house, mother,” said Miss Hebe.

“Oh, I cannot do that, if Lucilla wishes him admitted.”

“But you did, with young Squander,” pouted Hebe.

“And with young Dashington,” said her sis-

ter ; “but Lucilla’s quite your pet, and whatever she does is right.”

“Lucilla, my dears, has a masculine mind—my energy and your father’s cunning ; whatever she does, is right—she’s seldom ‘in the wrong box,’ as you will say when you drive about in Lady Archer’s carriage, and are chaperoned by Lady Archer, perhaps at Almack’s, and at Court. And now walk on, for I hate lagging, and I have much to do when I get home. I would certainly forbid Mr. Rory O’Brien the house, if I did not think my doing so might rouse Lucilla’s spirit of opposition ; besides, I feel sure she is bent on securing Sir Felix, and so you see I might be putting ‘the saddle on the wrong horse.’”

“That, I fancy, you are doing now,” murmured the eldest Miss Undermine ; “it seems no one is suspected of the power to attract or win Rory O’Brien, but Miss Lucilla ; however, that may not be the case, after all. *Nous verrons.*”

“Come, girls ! don’t let the grass grow under

your feet," shouted the stalwart mamma, who was in advance. "Take care of the minutes, those wandering elves. The hours, my girls, will take care of themselves; 'a minute saved is a minute gained.'"

And so, with many a wise saw, and shrewd proverb, in some instances, *verbatim*, in others, adapted for their use, the mother hurried them on. Many people turned to gaze at this handsome and powerful woman, whose crimson cheeks and buoyant, active step, her daughters vainly strove to emulate, although they walked as for a wager, and their glowing cheeks were such as Hygeia might have been proud of.

While they inhale new health and vigour with every mile, let us see what their sister Lucilla is doing in Bedford Row.

A little revived and invigorated by her cold bath, Lucilla Undermine made the most becoming toilette she could devise; and, aware that to such men as Sir Felix, delicacy and sentiment are woman's greatest charms, she as-

sumed the airs of a *belle defaillante*, shaded her plump cheeks with a little softening blonde cap, with a few lilies of the valley in the border, and a demi-veil thrown over it; simply braided her glossy hair, put on a most becoming white muslin morning gown, trimmed with white lace and knots of pink ribbon, and threw round her buxom form a white lace shawl, lined with rose silk; her hands, which a little betrayed the plebeian, were concealed, as much as possible, in fancy mittens, and her foot judiciously kept out of sight.

She let down the light-blue curtains of the library or morning-room, where she meant to receive her visitor, because she knew, through that coloured medium, a softening pallor would be given to her very blooming face. An armed chair was placed, as if accidentally, by the couch on which the young lady reposed, and near her, was a table furnished with writing materials, reviews, magazines, papers, MSS., and we need scarcely add, Sir Felix Archer's "Essay on

Taste;" a few cards of men of some literary eminence were also there—they were clients of her father's, most of them at law with their publishers, but Lucilla Undermine chose to have it appear, that they were personal friends of hers.

She certainly did look unusually attractive, *piquantie*, and even delicate.

The idea of adopting a style of dress and appearance so different from her usual one, had been taken from her observation of the great effect produced on Sir Felix, by the intellectual delicacy of Lucilla Temple's style of beauty, and his admiration of the simple and softening style of her dress.

It wants about a quarter of an hour of the time of Sir Felix's visit, and that gentleman, if he possesses no great virtues, has, at least, all the minor ones, and punctuality among the number.

Lucilla Undermine hears wheels approaching, and she steps with a beating heart to the

window, and peeps through the blue curtains like Aurora through the azure canopy of heaven; but she sees not the faultless and elegant equipage of Sir Felix Archer, moving smoothly along, with the glossy high-bred horses and brilliant harness, the chariot in such quiet, yet perfect taste, and the handsome liveries of the well-trained servants ; no, it is a very different vehicle which is fast approaching ; one of the gaudiest and dirtiest of the little street cabs, with a raw-boned horse, wall-eyed, and groggy, whose legs are bound up with sundry pieces of dirty rag, and who looks what, in a biped, would be called singularly knock-kneed. A large driver, with a battered hat, and an old ragged and whity-brown coat, is the Phaeton of this equipage ; but yet it makes Lucilla's heart beat more than Sir Felix's chariot would have done ; for instead of the elegant Baronet, ensconced in the soft cushions of his chariot, a young and eager face is peering out of the window of the little street cab ; nay, not only a

face, but head and shoulders are eagerly thrust out, on beholding for one moment, the face of Lucilla Undermine, which was instantly withdrawn; the “fare,” which was before dashing through Besford Row, pulled the check-string, and with an Irish oath, ordered the coachman to stop. This was no very easy matter, as the horse once set in motion, could not be easily or safely pulled up; another Irish oath esued, but Coachee was by no means behind-hand, and a loud wordy conflict was the result. However, at last the horse was brought to a swaggering sort of stand-still, and Mr. Rory O’Brien, for it was no other, let himself out at some risk.

The street door of Mr. Undermine’s house was half open, for a pretty maid was joking with the postman, who had just brought some letters, and Mr. Rory O’Brien, darting past her, and saying to her—

“ Don’t incommod me yourself, mavourneen, I’ll be me own trumpeter; I know the young mistress is at home;” he scampered up stairs

and stood on the landing, just as Lucilla, alarmed at the stopping of the cab, in which, from the window, she had detected Rory O'Brien, called out from the library, "Mary, I'm not at home to any one but Sir Felix Archer; I'm not at home to Mr. Rory O'Brien to-day."

"Very well, Miss," said a soft, maid-like voice at the door; "walk up, Sir Felix, if you please."

"Sir Felix Archer, Miss."

The door was thrown open. Lucilla Undermine came modestly forward, her eyes cast down, and raising them, met the jolly, laughing face of Rory O'Brien, who, being an excellent mimic, had shammed the maid's voice, and now exclaimed—

"So, so! you bewitching, deceiving, bewildering daughter of Eve and Evil, you're not at home, are you? Faith, it's myself has *found you out* then, betimes. Och, ye drive me wild with your cruel coquetry, and yer beautiful divilry! Why you look lovelier than

ever the tinth muse, and the fourth grace ; you darlint of the world."

" Mr. Rory O'Brien," said Lucilla Undermine, withdrawing the hand he had raised to his lips, " this is an unjustifiable intrusion, and as I am particularly engaged, I must beg you'll withdraw ; my parents do not allow me to receive gentlemen alone."

" Faith, then I'd better dismiss my equipage yonder, and stay wid you, else you'll be com-pilled to receive Sir Felix Archer alone, for it's himself you're expicing this minute. It's myself would not countenance your rebelling against the parital ones, and committing the sin of disobadience."

" Mr. Rory O'Brien," said Miss Lucilla Undermine, much agitated, as the time for Sir Felix's visit was fast approaching, " it is to my receiving you alone, that my parents particularly object ; Sir Felix is coming on business."

" Business, indeed ! then it's myself has a

mind to send him about his business. What business has he wid a pretty girl, I wonther. If I wasn't engaged myself in a cause, that makes my time worth a hundred pounds an hour, I'd soon find out his business here. But I must be off, for nothing can be done widout me ; and so good day, Miss Lucilla, and the next time I come, I'll be welcome."

"Rory," said Lucilla Undermine, relenting as she saw him retiring in anger—yes, relenting, though every movement betrayed some new discrepancy in his miserable toilette.

"Well, darlin', what would you wid Rory," he replied ; "speak out, for my time's gold."

"If it were," said Lucilla, "I should speak differently. We cannot marry, Rory!"

"And what's to hinder us? we're both of age."

"Yes! but what should we live on?"

"On Love and Hope, a cuishla, to say nothing of the pretty fortune your father of course will give you, and my lucrative and honourable pro-

fession, which alone would support you like a Queen."

"The Queen of the Beggars!" said the lady, nettled at his allusion to her expectations from her father, which a little threw in doubt the else flattering passion he professed for her.

"Besides," said Rory, "if I were once his son-in-law, old Undermine would see the sense of bringing my talents and ganius forward—briefs would come pouring in like hailstones in a storm; I'd have the finest practice in London, that is, if I'd time to attend to more than I have now, which is a noble practice as it stands."

"The only practice that you can boast of, Rory," said Miss Undermine sharply, "is by no means a noble one; it is that ignoble Irish practice of boasting and hoaxing, with which, although you quite fail to deceive others, I actually believe you do sometimes half-deceive yourself, like your absurd boasts, and Captain Conolly's and Major Fitzgeralds, of the 'hundred thou-

sand pounders,' as you call them, whom you could marry if you would."

"It's as threue as that we're min of honour."

"Exactly," said the lady—"just as true."

"I'm glad I've brought you to raison ; and now I must be off, else I'll be a mint of money out of pocket."

"Poor Rory!" said Lucilla, "it's a curious thing, that false and foolish and boasting as I know you are, I cannot help taking an interest in your fate."

"Lucilla, I'm an O'Brien, of a race of kings ! I'd be a king now, if Ould Ireland—

"First flower o' the earth, and first gim o' the say,"

had justice done her ; then do ye think that I, wid royal blood in my veins, will demane myself to own to poverty and want ? Not I ; while I'm alive I'll talk as if I had all the money the Saxons have robbed me of. But for their envy, I'd have the first practice at the bar ! I've got it in me, I only want an opportunity."

"Well, go now, Rory; we will talk of this another time."

"Why will ye doubt that the heiresses are all mad for me? ye feel in your own little heart I'm the man to make a woman go wild."

"You'll make *me* go wild, Rory, if you stay now."

"I cannot stay, or indeed I would. You're on a wild-goose chase, Lucilla, after that elderly gander, Sir Felix. It won't do, my darlin', the purse-proud Southron will sneer at one, an O'Brien has sued to, but it's myself is as full of expedients as Sir Robert Pale himself. You love me, Lucilla, and you know it, and you care more for my little finger than for the whole elderly body of Sir Falix. Let us put our heads together, mavourneen, and if Sir Falix won't have you, I'll show you a pretty revenge upon him. Meet me in Russell Square Gardens this evening; do, there's a swate sowl, and I'll put ye up to something; say yes, and I'm off."

"Yes, yes! I will," said Lucilla; for it

wanted but two minutes of Sir Felix's appointed time.

" Then there's a kiss that a Quane might covet, for O'Brien's lips are red with royal blood, and so ' mate me by moonlight, alone,' darlint! and don't deceive me, for the O'Briens are sure friends, and sure foes, too. Remember, Love or Vengeance, on the faith of an O'Brien, Och! the minutes run away as if they were wather instead of gowld. *A ce soir.*"

And so saying, this odd mixture of talent and folly, pride and meanness, passionately embraced the alas! willing Miss Undermine, and threw himself again into the crazy and miserable vehicle which awaited him; his object being, not as he had so falsely boasted, any law business likely to profit him, but an appointment with a city usurer, to try to get an oft-rejected acceptance cashed at frightful interest, and in which, we may here observe, he totally failed.

Rory O'Brien was, as he had boasted to Lucilla, of a very ancient and once illustrious Irish family; but poverty had thrown him much among demoralizing and worthless associates: he was witty, droll, eloquent, boasting, passionate, and unscrupulous. He was tall, but very awkwardly made, and though his face was very plain, his personal vanity was boundless; his only real charm was that winning smile, so common to talent in any country, and to the clever Irish in particular, and which revealed a beautiful set of teeth.

In other respects, if he did not actually squint—

“A cast in his eyes, to his looks added vigour.”

He had a massive and knobby forehead, from which stood out a profusion of shaggy rust-coloured hair; of this hair he was very proud, though not judiciously so; and a frill of bushy whiskers to match surrounded his long face, of the shape called “underhung;” sometimes a reddish moustachio or imperial peeped out,

but, as unprofessional, they were generally removed in Term-time. He had a spirit of ill-directed dandyism—and Poverty and bad taste united to make this a misfortune, for Neatness and Cleanliness were unknown to him, and finery is indeed revolting where they are not her hand-maidens. Imitation jewellery (large and showy), gay colours of unusual shades, a “varmint” hat, generally ill-conditioned, boots out of repair, and showy lemon-coloured gloves (bought cheap, because soiled and spotted), these were ingredients which good taste must at once condemn; and when we add to this, that a brick-dust sort of tinge on his cheek was suspected of not being laid on by Nature’s cunning hand, and that an old Spanish cloak of a bright cobalt blue, with a fur collar, and large ormolu clasp and chain, was used summer and winter to cover all discrepancies, we shall, we hope, have brought vividly before our reader, a person of some importance in this tale—Mr. Rory

O'Brien. A good, sensible, English wife, who would have had his abundant hair washed, oiled, and properly cut, and who would have enforced the most scrupulous neatness and cleanliness in all respects, have burnt all his sham jewellery, and compelled him to wear clothes of a subdued colour, and usual cut, would have been repaid for her trouble, for he had that hereditary air, peculiar to the well-born, and that variety and charm of expression intellect alone can give.

Of his own powers of pleasing the fair, he had a boundless opinion; and even with all his disadvantages, he had made many useless conquests, among whom he might rank the selfish, ambitious, and scheming Lucilla Undermine, whose mind and person he certainly admired, and whom he resolved to make useful to him, and, if he found it expedient—to marry. Parents shunned and dreaded him; and directly he showed any symptoms of preference in any quarter, the doors were closed

against him ; but this he looked upon as a tribute to his charms, not as a tacit sentence passed on his disreputable appearance, and doubtful position.

“ Sure,” he would say, “ the next thing to being loved and petted by the girls, is the being dreaded and expilled by the ilderlies ; for if it were not for fear of my charms wid the spalpeens, they’d only be too proud and too glad of my condiscission in enlivening their dull dinner wid my sparkling wit and humour.”

Spite of his gaudy, ill-judged dress, his silly boasts, and careless, scapegrace manner, he had a keen eye to his own interests, and had inwardly vowed to rise “ by hook or by crook,” as Mrs. Undermine would have said. He was keenly on the watch for any opening, but a friendless barrister has long to wait. Meanwhile, he kept himself in finery, and cook-shop fare, by writing inflammatory articles for Repeal papers and magazines in Ire-

land, and by contributing to Radical periodicals in England. He gave a few private lessons in law or classics when he could get a pupil, copied MSS., revised works, and in short, poor fellow, did any thing he could privately, to prevent the descendant of kings from being publicly pointed at as a pauper.

Had he been neat and quiet in his dress and manner, his talents, which the shrewd and powerful had remarked more than once, would have brought him into some little practice; but who would give a brief to a young barrister, with a light-blue cloak, an incipient moustache, an enamel brooch (with a view of Lucerne in an ormolu setting), lemon-coloured trousers, and primrose gloves, and to crown all, a strong smell of musk?

Some few acquaintances, before they knew him well, had tried to quiz him out of his absurdities, and some friends to reason with him; but he was obstinate beyond belief, and so furiously passionate, and so great an advo-

cate for the pistol, that he was soon left to his own sad want of taste and judgment.

He had a mother, old and ill, who, out of a small annuity, had saved and stinted as a mother only could, to give her only son an education and a profession ; and even now that he was, as the teachers say, “ completed,” and she had to pay off some incumbrances and loans contracted during his youth, she generally contrived to insert a dirty old bank note, in the long annual letter she wrote him, full of Irish news, every Christmas ; boundless love and praise, accounts of her own aches and pains, and earnest inquiries into his progress in life, and maternal prognostics of boundless success in Law, Literature, and Matrimony. He had some little affection and gratitude for this admiring and adoring parent, and that was one redeeming point in his vain and selfish nature.

CHAPTER X.

THE emotion Rory O'Brien had rekindled in Lucilla Undermine's bosom, made her approaching interview with Sir Felix rather distasteful to her, and it was lucky that the difficulty of drawing on a new pair of Parisian patent leather boots caused Sir Felix to be a quarter of an hour later than he had intended in Bedford Row. This quarter of an hour gave Miss Lucilla Undermine time to recover herself, and to calculate. One of her mother's favourite old saws was — “It's better to be an old man's darling, than a young man's slave;” and the power-

ful imagination of Lucilla Undermine placed vividly before her her future life, as Lady Archer; and as Mrs. Rory O'Brien. Rory's insinuating smile, irresistible manner, and ardent embrace, faded from her memory; while his jaunty, napless hat (in which he wore, with some pride, the hole a bullet had made in the rim, in one of his many duels), his thread-bare coat, soiled gloves, and broken boots, came back to arouse her contempt and prophetic fear; and at this very moment, a carriage stops at the door, a thundering rap follows with lightning speed. Lucilla steps to the window, and catches one delicious glimpse of the most elegant of equipages, the most perfect of horses, and dashing of liveries. The love of opulence and show, and parade and comfort, rushes back into her worldly heart; and so very desirable a husband did Sir Felix seem at that moment, so greedily did she covet that place by his side, and so much was her scheming and intriguing spirit roused by the difficulties she had to contend with, that

her cheek grew actually pale at his approach
her eyelids drooped, and the hand she me-
chanically offered trembled and grew chill.

Sir Felix was a little surprised : this soft, pale, feminine, and shrinking girl—was this the bold-eyed, buxom, rosy-cheeked damsel, whose glances had so courted his, and whose forwardness, admiring as it seemed, had a little annoyed his correct taste ? Poor thing ! it was flattering to possess such power ; a power useless, nay, dangerous, but not without its charm. Sir Felix's condescension became quite regal. “ My charming friend ! ” he said, detaining her hand for a moment, “ I am delighted to see you well,” was, alas ! all his fancy suggested.

“ I am not very well,” said the lady, pensively, “ but that I can easily account for ; that—”

“ The weather is a little gloomy,” said the common-place Sir Felix, “ and, perhaps, like a choice flower, you are under the skyey influence, and acutely sensible of any atmospheric change.”

"There is but one atmosphere in which my soul can revel and expand," said Lucilla, fixing her eyes upon him with what was meant for an impassioned softness. "An intellectual atmosphere, and if that is too rarified, my frame suffers for my spirit's ecstasy. In short, a night spent with such a companion as this," and she touched the crabbed-looking, uninviting '*Essay on Taste*,' may well account for a pale cheek and a heavy eye."

This speech admitted of two interpretations; but Sir Felix's bow, and the ineffable conceit of his smile, left no doubt how he took it.

"I am so glad you like it," he said, almost unconsciously taking her hand. "It is so sweet to be appreciated." The hand was not withdrawn, and thus they sat for some time, Miss Lucilla Undermine going rapidly through a most flattering *résumé* of the "*Essay on Taste*"; and though Sir Felix certainly felt his situation to be an awkward one, yet he could not resign the lady's hand, until she withdrew it; and

therefore he certainly verified another of Mrs. Undermine's old sayings, that "when a lady is willing, a man looks like a fool."

However, the sudden entrance of a maid-servant, to ask Miss Lucilla for the keys, induced her to withdraw her hand, and after she was gone, Miss Lucilla was so engaged in submitting to Sir Felix various critiques on his work, which, although in papers of no consequence, were still manna to his hungry vanity, that this somewhat too lover-like position was not resumed.

Time passes on rapidly when we are listening to our own praises, and Sir Felix had no idea how long he had been thus engaged; and even when that theme was a little exhausted, and Miss Lucilla Undermine's raptures savoured a little of sameness, Sir Felix was in no hurry to go.

Like all men of the world, he dreaded above all things, any misconception, and would not, on any account, place *himself* in a false position.

Now, though Miss Lucilla Undermine's attentions flattered him, and the adroitness with which she mingled the eulogizing critic with the admiring woman, gave a sort of novelty to her homage, yet he had been too much courted, petted, and admired, by women in general, to have been at any time long amused or interested; and now that he was positively in love with another, it was a marvel that two hours should have glided by so fleetly; his watch however, has told him that they are gone, and yet he lingers—and the theme is no longer himself, his genius, or his *Essay*; a triumphant hope flutters at his fair companion's heart, but it fades, as she, with a woman's tact, perceives that his object is to lead the conversation to her namesake, the fair Lucilla Temple.

Yes, the soft and sentimental devotion of his young companion has alarmed the cautious Sir Felix; and he is very anxious, while securing the friendship of so agreeable, clever, and use-

ful a friend, that no doubt of his sentiments, no possible misconstruction of his motives, should arise. " You are, I think," he said, " an intimate friend of the beautiful Lucilla Temple ? "

His companion winced a little, but with well-acted enthusiasm replied, " We love each other like sisters."

" Can one pretty woman love another ? " said Sir Felix.

" Can any one see Lucilla, and not love her ? " archly asked the damsel.

" No, I really believe not ! Lucilla ! it is another name for Beauty, Grace, Affection ! Nay, you will think me an enthusiast, when I tell you, that the very name of Lucilla brings an angel before my eyes !

There was a vindictive sparkle in his companion's eyes, as he spoke (assuming quite a youthful rapture), and a dark flush of jealousy and angry malice crossed her brow; for she saw, by his making no allusion to it, that Sir

Felix had quite forgotten that her name, too, was Lucilla; she felt too angry to remind him of it, and a dark and unprincipled vision crossed her mind for a moment, and suggested silence on that point; the next moment, she smiled, and said—"Mamma intends to invite Miss Temple to spend a week with us, at Undermine Villa. She hopes you will be of the party; we have little to offer by way of temptation."

"Nay, you offer everything that *could* tempt me."

"Mamma, bade me renew the invitation."

"Lend me your pen, while I accept so charming an offer. Are there pleasant walks near your country seat?"

"Yes, exquisite ones! so retired! so thoroughly rural! There you may court the Muse."

"There, I hope fair friend, to court something lovelier than the Muse; there, I will open my heart to you;" and, at this very moment, he looked up: Hebe Undermine

peeped from behind an armed chair, laughingly clapped her hands, and said, “ Whoop ! ”

She had been some little time in the room, which she had noiselessly entered, and stood concealed by the high-backed chair, listening to a conversation of which she mistook the import, for, coming in just as Sir Felix, with such enthusiasm, had proclaimed that the name of “Lucilla” brought an angel before his eyes, she had no doubt that the Lucilla meant was her own sister ; she therefore playfully crouched down behind the chair, thinking in her own hoydenish language, to “ hear some courting and see some fun ; ” and looking upon the stately Sir Felix as her future brother-in-law, a good deal of her awe of him vanished. When she saw him, instead of the fondling and philandering she had expected, preparing to write a note, she grew weary of her place of concealment, and jumping up she startled Sir Felix’s delicate nerves and offended his refined taste by the exclamation we have recorded. Now, of all things

in the world, Sir Felix held a romp in the greatest horror and aversion — most middle-aged dandies do ; such have been known, in their odious sport, to twitch off *toupés*, to allude to pads, wrinkles, and gray hairs ; they have all the rudeness of schoolboys, and all the privileges and immunities of women ; but a vulgar romp was of course trebly detestable to Sir Felix, and Hebe Undermine was (we grieve to own it) a very vulgar romp. She had much of her papa's low cunning and of her mother's bold vulgarity—she was a young Amazon for strength and energy, and for health, and a sort of rustic bloom and beauty, deserved her name of Hebe.

After she had clapped her hands, and cried “Whoop,” Sir Felix looked up with undisguised horror, tinged with disgust ; but recovering himself, he rose, and seeing a full-grown woman before him, he bowed in courtly style ; while Miss Lucilla Undermine vainly tried, by sundry frowns, signs, and mysterious head-

shakings, to warn Hebe not to commit herself, and to induce her to retire.

"No, no, Sir Felix," cried Hebe, with a stentorian voice, which made that gentleman flinch; "the days of bowing and scraping are at an end between us. Let's shake hands and be friends; I think it's high time, don't you, sister?" and seizing Sir Felix's delicate white hand, she shook and wrung it till his very shoulder ached.

"How long have you two been closeted together?" she began.

"Hebe, what do you mean?" stammered the angry Lucilla Undermine.

"What does *she* mean, Sir Felix, by all her winks and nudges? And what do *you* mean by 'pulling such a long face,' and sitting there as grave as a judge? 'I *twig, twig*,' as Renard says. I'm *de trop*. Well, well, I'm off; I never spoil sport."

"I do not understand your allusions, Miss Undermine," said Sir Felix, haughtily.

"Don't you! then you're duller than I took you to be! 'dull as ditch-water!'"

"Really, your language is far from flattering."

"Well, then, why do you provoke me?" pouted the romp. "You're as cross as two sticks! I only wanted to have a bit of fun with you."

"A bit of fun!" oh, how Sir Felix shuddered.

"I am a stranger," he said, "to what 'a bit of fun' means."

"Ah! so I might have guessed; and that being the case, I can tell you, you wouldn't be the man for my money; and grand as you are, I don't envy Lucilla—I pity her."

Lucilla! Sir Felix did not doubt for a moment that Hebe meant Lucilla Temple; he had, as we have said, quite forgotten (if he ever knew it) the existence of any other Lucilla. These words struck him; he knew how much young girls are influenced in their opinions of men by

their companions' remarks, and he did not wish to be represented to his beloved as a dull, morose, and elderly beau. He therefore playfully rose, and taking Hebe by both her hands, said—"Perhaps, you may find out some day, that I *do* know what 'a bit of fun' means, as well as any one. We will play hide-and-seek in the gardens of Undermine Villa; and you will see that I can cry 'Whoop!' as well as you can, my 'rosiest Amazon;' but say a good word for me to Lucilla. Don't tell her, that 'I pull long faces, and look as grave as a judge!'-I never do when she smiles. Give me a good character, and I'll give you—" He took a vinaigrette from his pocket, "this." And he added suddenly, and with assumed gallantry, kissing her plump and peony-like cheek, "this."

Hebe was not prepared for this "bit of fun;" nor was Sir Felix for the smart and rustic box on the ear he received in return, which Hebe instinctively applied, and which made lights dance before Sir Felix's eyes, and his pale ear tingle.

"For shame, Hebe!" cried Lucilla Undermine; "you ought to be proud, child, of Sir Felix's notice!"

"I'm not the girl to be proud of any man's kisses," said Hebe, wiping her cheek as a dairy-maid would have done; "I always give a spanking box in the ear in return, that's the way 'I pay them out.' It's for you to be proud, and delighted, and honoured. I say, Sir Felix, you'd get a box in the ear from her. *Well I never!*—why you're not a bashful man, surely? she's ready and you're not. Huzza! Poor Lucilla! say I again!"

Sir Felix thought it would never do to be reported as backward and bashful in such cases, and so, in spite of a feeble show of resistance, and a little struggle and demur, he succeeded in kissing Lucilla Undermine, too. Hebe during this struggle playfully made her escape, and just at the moment Sir Felix kissed Lucilla Undermine's cheek, Renard Undermine entered at another door; he was about to with-

draw as if unperceived, but Sir Felix, a little disconcerted, said—" How do, Renard ? come in, and don't look so fraternal and terrible ; only a joke—no harm done, I take it ; that little romp, Hebe, challenged me to kiss her and her fair sister : what man could resist such a challenge ? "

" Hebe is only a silly child," said Renard, rather gravely ; " but my sister there, is a discreet young lady, and as I have never had any reason to accuse her of the slightest deviation from the strictest propriety, so I exonerate both her and you on the present occasion, and feel the most perfect confidence in both. I came here to speak to you on business. Sister, I wish to see Sir Felix alone ; you had better take a walk."

Lucilla thought it looked graceful and feminine to be submissive, and as she rose, she extended her hand to Sir Felix, and said, " Let me thank you, Sir Felix, for the intellectual banquet your conversation has been to me."

“ While you are making your adieus,” said Renard, “ I will just run up stairs and fetch a little document essential to my communication, Sir Felix.”

“ Are you likely to see Miss Temple, shortly?” asked Sir Felix, partly from a wish to know, partly to renew in his companion’s mind, the impression of his attachment to Miss Temple.

“ I shall probably see her this evening.”

“ Will you remember me to her?” he said; “ will you tell her all that has passed between us?”

“ Can you doubt me! ah, how little you know of your poor friend’s heart!”

“ Nay, I do not doubt you; and believe me, fair friend, that though the world calls me the favourite of Fortune, I need the cordial and the balm of your *friendship*, more than you can guess. Stop,” he said; and he took a splendid carnation from his buttonhole, and turning to the table, wrote a line on a strip of paper.

It was this—

“ For my soul’s idol, the beautiful Lucilla!”
He twisted the paper round the stem of the flower, and handed it to her: “ Will you place this where you know I wish it to be?”

“ I will,” said the lady.

“ Then God bless you!” fervently said Sir Felix, handing her the flower, and at the same time, with an instinct and a habit of gallantry, raising her hand to his lips. Renard returning at that very moment, heard the benediction, saw the caress, and beheld his sister colouring with the flower in her hand. He, however, appeared to see nothing but the open letter over which he was running his sharp attorney eyes.

CHAPTER XI.

THE communication Renard Undermine had to make, was one which caused Sir Felix Archer to elevate his eye-brows, and draw down the corners of his handsome mouth; indeed, it affected nothing less than the tenure by which he held Felix Park—a place on which he had lavished every modern refinement and Sybarite luxury. The letter Renard Undermine held in his hand was from Ferret and Scrape, lawyers once employed by Sir Felix's eldest brother, who, after a life of extravagance and folly, had died of a

broken heart. This unfortunate man was father to that nephew of Sir Felix's whom we have introduced to our reader. Felix Park had belonged to him; he mortgaged it in a time of disastrous anguish and peril; and as he really doted on his child, upon whom it had been as it were entailed, the struggle between a prison and his son cost him his life. Although it was cruelly unfair to his son, it was not legally unjust to dock this entail, since, inheriting the estate from his grandfather, Sir Felix's brother, Ralph Acher, was the last person mentioned in the deed of entail, and of course he had nothing to do but to suffer recovery; this at last he did, the estate was mortgaged, and his brother, Felix Archer, even then a wealthy man, was the mortgagee. Now Sir Felix Archer's conduct to his brother had always been of that kind generally displayed by the careful and rising members of a family, to the extravagant and sinking.

Sir Felix did not quite refuse to assist his

brother, as long as there was any tolerable security to be given for his advances. He purchased several valuable policies of him, which Ralph might, but for his brother, have had some difficulty in disposing of, and had found it quite impossible to pay up; and the comfort Ralph Archer found in this temporary relief, quite hid from his mind that Felix had made a very good thing of it, indeed! Then all the family plate which Ralph, as eldest son, had inherited, Felix bought of him at a somewhat higher price than five shillings an ounce, which is what he would have got for old silver at a silversmith's; the same generosity was shown him with regard to all old family relics, books, pictures, furniture, china, &c., &c., Sir Felix constantly reminding his brother that the value of any given thing—

“Is just as much as it will bring.”

And certainly no stranger would have given for these heir-looms quite as much as did brother Felix.

Ralph quieted his own aching conscience a little, by the conviction, which he did his best to nourish, that Felix would never have any children (he had then been twice married); and that, if childless, he would naturally leave his acquired fortune to his nephew, while Archer Court was positively entailed on his heirs male. But the time did come, and with giant strides too, when Ralph Archer had no more security of any kind to offer, nothing else to dispose of; and then it was that the heartlessness of Felix's character dawned fully upon him. Ralph had ever been his father's pride and his mother's darling; he was one of the handsomest men of his day, and the old solicitor determined to make a gentleman of him: for this, nature had evidently intended him; even as a child he was ever ready to give—while Felix hoarded his sugar-plums, Ralph was lavish of his. The old solicitor took the hint, but in the wrong way; he sent Ralph to a public school, thence to Oxford, then bought him a

cornetcy in a flash dragoon regiment ; he married the Hon. Matilda Stanley, the belle of a season, with matchless beauty and illustrious birth, but alas ! not only with nothing, but worse than nothing, as the beauty was in debt. They lived extravagantly, and Ralph forestalled much of his property and sold many of his rever- sions, so that at his father's death he came into little except Felix Park. His wife, the beautiful Matilda, had died in giving birth to a son, our friend Frank, and Ralph Archer went on "faster and faster," till disease of body and anguish of mind, laid their heavy hands upon a ruined man ; meanwhile, Felix was bred up as an attorney ; his boyhood was darkened by envy of his brother's advantages, his parents' lavish preference, and a determination to beat him in the worldly race, sullied his else praise- worthy industry, and energy ; the scapegrace and spendthrift played into his hands. Very early indeed the dashing cornet began to bor- row of his attorney brother, very early to sell

small reverences to the wily and warlike Felix ; but Felix, though a man of business at heart, had all the tastes of a man of pleasure—tastes which he vowed to gratify one day, but not yet. Felix was very handsome too, and a rich widow of fashion, whose late husband was chief of the firm of Archer, Undershaft, Twist, Turn, and Archer, had so many interviews with the insinuating young Archer about her splendid jointure, that at last she could not bear to lose sight of him, and they were married !

Yes, shortly after the marriage of the dashing young dragoon with the Hon. Matilda Stanley, with £2,000 of debt, the young lawyer received the hand of the handsome widow, Mrs. Flannerton, with a jointure of £2,000 a year. *Aide-toi et je t'aiderai*, is a French proverb, full of wisdom and knowledge of men. No sooner was Felix well off, than his father decided it was necessary to do something handsome for the dear boy, and so he did ; in addition to his share in the firm, which hitherto had been but nominal,

he made him an allowance, and secured to him Archer Court, an ugly, but large estate in Yorkshire, which had belonged to a client of old Archer's, but somehow had glided, as such possessions often do, into the hands of his solicitor.

It was not very long after this, that old Archer died; and Mrs. Felix Archer, from the imprudent use of a dangerous cosmetic, and the still more injurious use of a tight corset at a ball, entered the family vault of the Archers, at Felix Park, a few weeks after it had been opened to receive the old solicitor, Ralph Archer. So seldom does Death entering a family, satisfy his greedy maw with one victim.

Yes, there they lay side by side, the once gay widow, his young son's wife, so lately displaying her full-blown charms and gorgeous attire, her rouge, and her ringlets, her turban, her jewels, and her train; and there lay the spare and worn little lawyer. She died at

forty-five, and he at sixty nine, and both died victims to the ruling passion. Oh, how often is it thus! The immediate cause of her death was, as we have said, tight lacing at a ball, and of his, a wet walk over the estate of a half-ruined nobleman, previous to lending him a sum on mortgage.

Felix Archer, free, and so well off! having, through his late fashionable wife, been introduced into good society, and now having that still better introduction, an income of about £5,000 a year, and an unfettered hand—his prospects, are brilliant indeed!

But now he aims at a title. In those days a baronetcy might occasionally, though privately, be purchased—such a thing was in the market. Felix Archer presented a petition to Royalty on an important occasion; Felix Archer became Sir Felix; but whether the petition, or a sum of a few thousands, or his own personal merits, procured him this honour, who shall determine? And now it was plain sailing for Sir Felix Archer

on the ocean of fortune; now was he like a fine picture, in a fine frame—handsome, clever, insinuating; now was he the darling of the mammas, and the *desiré* of the daughters. And all this while Ralph Archer, his brother, was going as rapidly down hill, as Sir Felix was hastening up. After the mortgage of Felix Park, and the sale of everything of value to his wealthy brother, poor Ralph knew not what to do: luckily, a rich member of his wife's family, Hugh Stanley, adopted his sons, and poor Ralph retired to Ostend. While living there in obscurity, and almost in want, his brother, Sir Felix, married again the beautiful daughter of a family of rank, with £30,000.

Ralph applied to his brother for the third time, since he had had no security to offer, and for the third time in vain—more in vain, indeed, than ever—for his former letters had been answered, though with sarcasm, reproach, hollow counsel, and absurd assertions of incapacity to assist him. This last letter was unanswered,

and the next tidings he heard of his brother, were, that he was dead—dead in want, and sorrow, and neglect—and Sir Felix Archer became master of Felix Park.

Felix Park was beautifully situated on the borders of Windsor Forest. The building was spacious and old, and united every charm of historic association, picturesque dilapidation, and discomfort. Much of the best part of the house was sacrificed to an immense old hall, interesting to an historian or an antiquary, but in which a modern gentleman would shiver and shake, even in summer, and lay in rheumatics and agues. Then there were long dark corridors, very convenient for the ghosts and goblins which report said traversed them at midnight, smoky chimneys, and small windows, but the whole was rich in draperies of ivy, and in many a legend of siege and defence. And the old building was rendered, habitable. It had belonged to the De Courcys for centuries, but in the time of the father of old Ralph

Archer, himself a lawyer, and by name Felix, it had come to the hammer and been purchased by him, just at it was—the ruinous old building, and the lands, which owed little of their beauty to art or cultivation, and in fact, had almost regained—

“The raggedness of nature.”

However, old Felix Archer did much for this place, and changed its name from De Courcy Castle to Felix Park, altering its nature almost as much as its name; but yet, guided by a clever architect, it was done in good taste. Ralph, his son, followed in his steps; and when it came into the possession of the second Ralph, the fashionable dragoon, it was one of the loveliest seats in the lovely county of Berks.

The man of fashion, whose chosen resorts were London, Paris, and Baden Baden, only dwelt at Felix Park at seasons, when he could fill the house with sporting friends; but when it came into the possession of Sir Felix Archer, it struck him that in one of the meadows there

was a delightful site for a modern mansion ; and a quarry of beautiful stone having been recently discovered in an adjoining field, he immediately set about building a house, which, with the assistance of the first architect of the day, was the *beau-ideal* of elegance and refinement. No expense was spared, and as, luckily, the old hall of the De Courcys stood out of the way, and in a sort of hollow, while the mansion of Felix Park smiled on a hill, Sir Felix did not pull down the old place, but allowed his steward, almost a gentleman himself, to inhabit it.

Sir Felix loved Felix Park, and gloried in it ; the estate had been his grandfather's, and to a man of no birth *that* was something. Then he was popular and courted in the neighbourhood, and it was so near Windsor, and the air agreed with him, and he had obtained it in spite of what he had always considered the unjust partiality of his father ; the brother he had always envied and loathed, had been obliged to yield

it to him. How often had his narrow heart been galled, even in boyhood, by the deference paid in the neighbourhood to the young heir of Felix Park—how as a child had his heart swelled, and the bitter tears of premature passion rolled over his eyes, when a beautiful and well-caparisoned pony was brought round for the young heir, and a donkey was provided for poor Felix—how the imprudent gibes and jeers of his silly brother and his brother's tiger ate into his very heart—and how heavy were the blows inflicted on the long-eared son of toil (but how often in this world do the innocent suffer); —then, too, in the little juvenile parties of the neighbourhood, how the prettiest of the little coquettes smiled on the frank and handsome heir—and how even his mother looked with pride and fondness (seldom shown to him) on her eldest hope.

What evil joy and triumph were in his heart, when it was all his! The woods, where he had

so often roamed in moody envy ; the fields, over which it was once such bitterness to see the young heir canter ; the waters, beneath which his dark heart had wished (a Cain-like wish) that his brother were laid ; the stables, where with boyhood's playful but provoking arrogance, that brother had denied his donkey's right to enter, switching him the while, with a galling though sportive insolence, which the younger and smaller boy could not resist, though he inwardly vowed to revenge it ; the ball room, scene of his brother's youthful triumphs, and his own precocious anguish—how all these crowded on his mind when first he led his beautiful and high-born wife through the rooms of the old hall, and the groves of the park, and thence to the new and elegant mansion ! And if a pale phantom would cross his path of that brother, as he saw him on his poor bed in a foreign inn, pinched with want, and care written even on the brow of Death—that phantom has no power over him in the

flush of triumph and success ; but such phantoms bide their time. It were no marvel if the day should come, when he would give the very woods he now so proudly gazes on, not to see that pinched, contracted form, that anxious look of anguish and despair, so awful on the face of the dead ; those bony hands, that desolate room—oh ! then, all the music of Italy, or dearer still, the bleating of his flocks and herds, and the welcome of his tenants, will not drown the emphatic words of the poor Flemish hostess as she showed him the body previous to its being coffined to be conveyed to the family vault of Felix Park :—

“ Mon Dieu qui aurait dit qu'il avait un frere. Il a manque de tout. Il est mort dans la misere ! moi j'ai fait mon possible, mais je suis pauvre—et il etait fier le pauvre homme. Il ne voulait rien accepter, j'ai fait cela pour l'amour de Dieu ; qui aurait dit qu'il avait un frere—et un frere comme Monsieur. Dieu aye pitie de nous.”

These words, and the poor woman's tears, as she crossed herself; these and the image of that dead brother as he saw him last! these are not for the rosy days of Hope and Happiness, and Triumph; but if ever Grief, Disappointment, or Sickness, make one gap in the fence that surrounds the prosperous man, they will follow, close like hell-hounds on the track, steal on his solitude, dog him in his lonely walks, hunt him to his pillow—house him to that last home, the grave!

And it is the best part of this very Felix Park, so long the object of his dastard envy, and later, of his vile ambition, that by a mere oversight of an attorney, seems now to be almost lost to him, now that he has half decided on marrying the girl he loves with such selfish passion—one (who being, neither like his first wife, a widow of forty-five, nor like his second, a delicate creature, with a constitution ruined by late hours, and naturally with a consumptive tendency), he confidently believes would, by

giving him an heir, save Archer Court at least from his detested nephew—a nephew who, if he inherited nothing else, did certainly inherit his hatred of his brother—and save him from the necessity of making a will, and of outraging public opinion by leaving Felix Park away from his family, to some public charity, in which his uncharitable heart felt no interest.

Long and painful was Sir Felix Archer's conference with Renard Undermine. It seemed that a part of the estate, and *that* the very part on which the mansion and the ornamental grounds stood, and the field containing the stone quarry, were held by a different tenure—that is to say, Sir Felix's share consisted of the old Hall of the De Courcys, and the farms and meadows round about. But for the rest, it now became alarmingly clear to Sir Felix, that not merely of the fields on which the modern mansion stood, and in which he had laid out his pleasure grounds, but also of that field containing the stone quarry,

so freely used by him, in the construction of the modern mansion, some necessary legal formalities had not been gone through; and therefore the entail was, with regard to that part, in full of force, and his hated nephew was the tenant in tail, and not only entitled to it, but to all the back rents, which had been accumulating in his favour for the last ten years, and which would almost enable him to redeem the whole."

For some time, the workings of Sir Felix's face, on first perceiving the probable truth of this statement, resembled the approach of paralysis; and his ghastly pallor, and the nervous twitching of his limbs, made Renard Undermine fear he would have a fit of some kind; however, after a few minutes, and after drinking a glass of French brandy, which Renard silently went in search of, and tendered to him, he recovered with a sigh so deep, that it was almost a groan.

It had often been a source of mean and vin-

dictive delight to Sir Felix, to reflect, at how absurdly small a price his brother's pride and necessities had induced him to mortgage Felix Park ; even though the stone quarry had been discovered, and they had sometimes discussed the erecting of a mansion on the slope of one of the meadows. Could this rash, foolish, spendthrift, have leagued with old Ferret to outwit him, the lawyer ! did his brother know, while receiving the small and inadequate mortgage money, that this valuable part of the estate would ultimately belong to his injured and disinherited son ; that he must succeed as tenant in tail ? was that his view in advising him to build this new mansion ? Who could tell, who shall cross-question the dead ? and old Ferret and old Scrape were dead, and they had conducted the whole affair ; Ferret had died before his ruined client, Ralph Archer, and Scrape had died suddenly a year after. Perhaps these men were in the plot against Sir Felix Archer ; perhaps they meant to hold their knowledge *in ter-*.

rorem over him, or, at their own convenience, to let loose the tenant in tail upon him, just when his splendid mansion and grounds were completed

“ I am sure there is some mistake here,” he said ; “ Ferret and Scrape conducted the whole affair, made out the mortgage deed ; had there been any such flaw, they would have opposed my taking possession.”

“ That was old Ferret and Scrape ; they have long been in another world. What their object was, I cannot say ; whether attachment to your brother, who was the making of them ; whether to have you in their power, out of revenge, about that little case, in which they made out that you jilted Scrape’s daughter, and struck old Ferret : or whether it was an oversight ; but, as you know, old Ferret died before your brother, and old Scrape of an apoplexy soon after. Now, my own opinion is, that the present Ferret and Scrape, juniors, knew nothing about it ; besides, we have had the deeds all along in our possession.”

"And have still?" asked Sir Felix eagerly."

"Yes, but it seems they have a copy; this copy, which they met with lately, and looked over by chance, has set them on this scent. It seems your nephew Morice, did Ferret some great service in Italy—risked his life, to save him from banditti, or some such romance, and a great friendship has sprung up between them. Now, partly friendship, and partly the hope of profit, have set Ferret and Scrape up to this."

"It will require great caution, and much consideration; luckily, the *onus probandi* rests with them; and, as I paid my poor lamented brother the mortgage money for the whole estate, so, in equity, I feel justified in retaining it if I can."

"Why, they state that the mortgage money was not more than a very moderate price for the freehold estate, namely, the old De Courcy Hall, with the lands, farms, &c., thereunto belonging, *without* the fields on which your mo-

dern mansion stands, those which you have laid out as pleasure grounds, and the quarry ; and if I am not much mistaken, they are prepared to prove, that your eldest brother, Mr. Archer, and his solicitors, Messrs. Ferret and Scrape, were fully aware (and will pretend to infer that you were so too) that that part of the estate was copyhold, and it was always meant by all parties that your nephew should continue heir in tail. You see, as for all copyhold property (entailed) recovery *must* be suffered in the Court of the Lord of the Manor ; and Mr. Archer, being driven by his difficulties abroad, when no such Court was sitting, was guilty perhaps of a little *ruse*, in outwitting you ; but however, had not old Ferret and Scrape been leagued with your brother, Mr. Archer, to deceive you, and had not the former deceased before you came into the estate as mortgagee, and the latter so soon after, it would have been seen to ere this ; and I really believe, Sir Felix, old Scrape managed the whole matter out of revenge against

you (and it might be some feeling of attachment for your brother and his son); you see, the latter being a minor, and the whole estate being supposed to be included in the recovery, and the mortgage, and the transfer, at old Scrape's death, of all the deeds to our office, your title never was disputed; and, but for this infernal copy of the deed, newly formed by Ferret, junior, and that prying, meddling, blockhead, young Scrape, that title never would have been arraigned."

"But my nephew is so romantically high-flown and honourable, such a Quixotic ass in all worldly affairs!" said Sir Felix, trembling with despair and terror, as with an ague.

"Ah!" said Renard, shaking his head, "but if they prove to him that the mortgage money was very inadequate, even to the value of the estate, without the fields in question; if they convince him his father always looked to this, to indemnify his disinherited son a little—you know he cherishes a deep love, even for the

father who ruined him!—Oh! Sir Felix, he will proceed at once!"

" Damnation!" shouted Sir Felix, rising and stamping with wrath, " that I, a lawyer, should have been guilty of so damnable an oversight. What fiend possessed me! oh, yes! that drivelling idiot Ralph, outwitted me, and those hell-hounds, Ferret and Scrape, helped him. Doubtless, after the receipt of the mortgage money, of which he paid £5,000 into the hands of Hugh Morice, for the use of his son he got abroad, that if the question were mooted, as it would have been, had not I been the most accursed of asses, he might be out of the way; to have been outwitted by him, Renard, it is enough to kill me."

" Nay, Sir Felix! if it comes to the worst, you must resign!"

" I would rather die than resign," said Sir Felix, gasping with passion, and turning deadly pale; " why, I have spent a fortune on it! nay, if it came to that, I suppose Renard, those

rogues, Ferret and Scrape, would rejoice to compromise, eh ? My nephew knows nothing of it yet, I presume !”

“ I must see them, Sir Felix,” said Renard; “ I must feel my way ! I must sound them ! every man has his price.”

“ Act for me, my dear fellow, and if you manage this well, you shall not find me either ungenerous or ungrateful. By George ! it is near six—come home to dinner with me, and we will discuss this terrible affair more at length. It seems like a hideous dream ! Felix Park, indeed ! I’d sooner lose my right hand—nay, my head !”

“ Oh, it must not be, Sir Felix,” canted Renard !

“ Well said, my friend,” replied Sir Felix, excited to tears ; “ it must not, and it shall not be, if there is power in law can help it.”

“ It is not law, but lawyers, must do that,” said Renard.

“ You shall be that lawyer, my Renard,

and it shall be the making of you. Come! I try my new French cook for the first time to-day."

"Come along, then. I suppose we must '*go the entire pig*,' Sir Felix, now we're '*in for it*.'"

"For the first time, Renard was thus vulgarly familiar with the "great Sir Felix."

But there was a dishonourable secret between them now, and it is astonishing how that levels distinctions. Sir Felix is a wealthy baronet and a client of the firm; Renard is a little petty-fogger, but both are acting as *felons*. And Sir Felix is so condescending, and Renard so presuming, that they almost meet on an equality for the first time.

For the first time, too, Renard takes Sir Felix's arm, who first flinches and then smiles; and for the first time, Renard lolls back in Sir Felix Archer's carriage.

CHAPTER XII.

MISS TRUEBLUE listened with the deepest and most anxious interest to Lucilla's narrative. She had no doubt whatever, that the note which had so alarmed the poor girl, came from the insolent and much to be dreaded Trelawney. "Poor child!" she said, "these are the trials of beauty; the penalty to be paid for the costliest and most love-inspiring gift Nature bestows on her most favoured daughters. The plain, the ugly, and the deformed, my Lucilla, while mourning (as in their hearts they ever must) over their loveless, joyless, and mo-

notorious destinies, are too apt to look upon the life of a Beauty, as a perpetual *fête*. They do not consider what dangerous passions that beauty may kindle in lawless men, what snares those *sad* wretches, called the "Gay," are always spreading for, in every class. Pleasure tries to make it its prey. They overlook the bitter envy, the ceaseless calumnies, of one sex, the terrible conflicting jealousies and fierce revenge of another, the pain of useless conquests, the necessary torture attendant on slighting and refusing many true lovers. I begin to think, my Lucilla, that though the life of a Beauty may be one of varied and brilliant romance, it is not a happy one; and then the day must come when she is beautiful no more, or to see the matchless locks grow scant, and gray, the liquid lustre leave the speaking eyes, the smoothness and the sheen of Beauty's cheek depart, wrinkles where all was so glossy, but no more. I have pined, I have prayed for beauty, in the despair of defor-

mity, but I am not sure it is the good fairy's gift, my Lucilla."

"No," said Lucilla, her eyes filling with tears, and fondly embracing her poor friend, "but a mind and heart like yours, they are, in your own playful language, the best gifts of the good fairy; and indeed they lend a charm to your eyes and smile, which make you lovelier than any outline or gaudy colouring could."

"Ah, Lucilla, you can afford to be generous; nay, I will believe that to the discerning and grateful heart of a woman, there may be some atoning substitutes for beauty of form and face, but not to man. Believe me, the devotion of years can be effaced by a beautiful countenance seen for the first time; and a fine form can cast a lasting shadow on the destiny of the truest and tenderest of hunchbacks."

"Oh, your judgment is biassed on this point," said Lucilla; your feelings mislead you."

"Well, a French maximist, dearest, is not

likely, on such a subject, to be biassed or misled. It is La Bruyere who remarks so wisely, how many sacrifices, how much devotion, how much merit, it requires to awaken after long years those feelings *que produisent dans un instant un beau visage, ou une belle main.*"

"*Une belle main,*" said Lucilla; "what would be the value of a love won by *une belle main.*"

"Nothing to one who need only be seen to be loved; but I, Lucilla, I wish I had even that one charm. A beautiful hand is a very beautiful thing to look at; see, lavish nature did not forget to add it to all your other gifts; but who could covet such a hand, or rather claw, as this;" and seizing Lucilla's white hand, with its taper fingers, exquisite nails, and rosy palm, she held beside it, in derision, her own, of a tint half leaden, half yellow, the joints knotted and projecting as those of the deformed generally are, the nails flat, and the thumb unnaturally short.

"Any one," said Lucilla, "who knew how

good and gifted is that hand, how eager to assist, how ready to give, would love it better, far better than—”

“ Than beauty, as I said before; a woman might—”

“ And a man of sense still more.”

“ Ah, my love, a man of sense! such sense! ‘*ou n’enfait plus*,’ as the French song says. Why, even La Bruyere observes, “ If an ugly woman is loved, it is passionately, either because her lover is more than usually weak—”

“ *Ou*,” said Lucilla with animation, interrupting her, “ *ou qu’elle possède des charmes, au dessus de celles de la Beauté*. That is your case, dear Miss Trueblue; and when you are loved, I am sure it will be passionately.”

“ When I am loved! Chaos is come again,” said Miss Trueblue, and the tears filled her eyes, she dashed them away, and said, “ but enough of me and my follies, Lucilla! you are in peril, and I think the best thing you can do, is to come quietly down into the country with

us ; give no one out of your own family any hint of your destination. We are not going to our accustomed retreat, where perhaps that terrible Trelawney might suspect you had taken shelter, and which he knows full well. To divest all suspicion, we will mislead all our people in London, and indeed perform rather a round-about journey that all clue may be lost; my dear father, whose health is much impaired, will promote my wishes to the utmost, in all but one instance," and she sighed; "our secret is perfectly safe with him, and if you allow me to impart it, we shall have all the benefit of his experience and advice."

" Do as you please, dear, kind friend!" said Lucilla; " I am sure my parents will gladly agree to my spending some time with you, they so highly respect, esteem, and admire you. But are you quite sure Mr. Trueblue will not consider me an intruder?"

" You do not know my father, dear Lucilla! and therefore you cannot understand how re-

joiced he will be to have an opportunity of indulging me in this respect, in order to atone for the pain he knows he gives me in another. And now let us hasten to the young artist's; we ought to have been there an hour ago."

As Miss Trueblue and Lucilla drove through Bond Street, the latter suddenly drew back, and Miss Trueblue pressing forward to ascertain the cause of her emotion, beheld Lord Trelawney, with his accustomed body-guard of sporting men; they were all laughing immoderately, as if at some excellent joke of his Lordship's connected with our friends. Lord Trelawney bowed familiarly to Miss Trueblue, as he had done to Lucilla. Miss Trueblue turned very pale, but Lucilla was pale and trembling.

" Everywhere that horrid man haunts me," she said; " I feel as if he were my evil genius."

" He will persecute you, I fear, till you have a husband to protect you."

"A husband, I a husband."

"Well, and why not?"

"Why, who would marry a penniless girl?"

"Who? come, do not *finesse* with me, Lu-
cilla; I so love your *nävette* and your candour
— you know you believe Sir Felix Archer
would."

"No, I am not certain of that; since you
insist on candour, I believe he likes me, but
as to his having positively made up his august
mind to offer me his mighty and matchless
self, I am not sure of it; he is a great flirt, nay,
even a great jilt, I believe; his intentions I have
great doubts of, but I have none of my own."

"How so?"

"That I would rather be an old maid and a
beggar than be Lady Archer."

"And Renard Undermine? you know that
he likes you."

"And that I loathe him. But I am not at
all sure he would offer me his trickery hand."

"And Lord Trelawney?"

“ Ah, do not joke about him ! he fills me with dread ; but even if, instead of the insulting attentions he wishes to offer me, he were to throw himself and his coronet at my feet, I would reject them both.”

“ And the young artist ?”

Lucilla started, but was silent ; however, the unbidden tears which filled her eyes, and the scarlet blush that spread over her face and neck, answered for her, even before she found courage to say—“ Oh, Miss Trueblue ! a foreigner, an artist, and perhaps as poor and friendless as myself.”

“ A bond of sympathy between you. If I were loved and lovely, I would rather marry a man who could never doubt the sincerity and disinterestedness of my love.”

“ But you do not know the miseries of penury. I have always hoped, if I did marry, to be able to make my dear parents comfortable. Oh, no, I must not think of such happiness as marrying for love only.”

"But if the young artist could win their consent, and prove that he could maintain you in comfort, and even elegance, and assist them, then—"

"Oh, do not suppose such bewildering impossibilities, dearest friend! Such dreams make the cold realities of life too real! No, I will not give my hand to one I loathe, even for my beloved parents' sake; but I cannot sacrifice them, and with God's help, I never will!" As she spoke, her tears fell fast, and Miss True-blue said—

"You are a dear, good girl, and I know no one so worthy of you as the young artist; but *nous verrons*, if your parents only wish to see you respectably and happily married, I think if he covets your hand he need not despair."

"True," said Lucilla, archly smiling through her tears; "we are taking that for granted."

"I dare say you have some good reasons for doing so. Well, I prophesy, that if you fall in

love with each other, I shall see you married with the full consent of all parties."

" Oh, if you knew how papa dislikes foreigners ; and suppose this gentleman should be a Roman Catholic ?"

" But I know he is not, and his mother at least was English. Besides, did not papa's daughter at one time share papa's prejudice against foreigners, and artists ?"

" But papa is not likely to fall in love with him."

" Then you own *you have* done so ! " said Miss Trueblue, joyously clapping her hands."

" I did not mean to own that," said Lucilla, blushing deeply ; " but I do admire him *very very* much, and I do think any woman *might* fall in love with him."

" Very well, and now here we are ; smooth your hair ! I hope he will perceive no traces of tears. Have you brought some of your poems ? Here, take a peep in this ; " and Miss Trueblue handed Lucilla a hand-glass out of a

pocket of the carriage. "It always put me out of humour, but I should think it would have a contrary effect with you."

They found the young artist ready and waiting, and the picture on his easel; the exquisite Psyche already far advanced. The likeness was perfect, and proved how vividly Lucilla's face must have been impressed on his mind.

CHAPTER XIII.

URGED by Miss Trueblue, and passionately entreated by the young painter, Lucilla repeated many of those poems, which had been so coldly received by Sir Felix Archer ; and disheartened as she had been by the faint praise, and even disparaging criticisms, of the author of the “Essay on Taste,” she was scarcely prepared for the enthusiastic eulogies of her present audience.

“ And now, dearest, give us that lively ballad you call ‘ Moonlight,’ and then I will tease you no more,” said Miss Trueblue.

" My brother Tom says it ought to be called ' Moonshine,' said Lucilla, laughing ; " and in this opinion I believe he is borne out by his two friends, the great Sir Felix Archer, and a little tiger belonging to some neighbours of ours, of the name of Jock, who also considers himself the Muse's boy."

" Sir Felix would be a poor judge," said the artist, " at least, if his ' Essay on Taste' is a fair criterion of his merits."

" You know it, then ?"

" Too well."

" I am glad you do not like it; I feared it was my want of taste prevented my appreciating it, and perhaps, a little revenge on Sir Felix's Muse, for his visible contempt of mine."

" Ah ! do not believe in that contempt, my dear Miss Temple ; he must have been astounded, as all dull, heavy writers are, at a facility of expression, and a brilliancy of thought, so rare, and so remarkable ; but as to Sir Felix

himself, he (in himself) mistakes obscurity for depth, forgetting that nothing is so dark as a hollow; however, to waste no more time on him, let me beg for the ballad ; it is folly indeed to throw away on Sir Felix's Muse, hours that might be winged by yours ; begin, I implore you !”

LUCILLA'S BALLAD.

“ 'Twas the dead of the night, when Emily stole
From beneath her mother's eye ;
And she paused not, to mark the light clouds roll,
O'er the Queen of the midnight sky :

“ She paused not, to see how the dew-drops hung,
On foliage, flow'ret, and all ;
Nor how some midnight fairy had strung
The blush-rose's coronal.

“ Bright things, and beautiful, passed she by ;
For 'tis in the moon's pale light
That the rosebud rewards with her sweetest sigh
The song of the bird of the night.

“ And the water-lily floats on the breast
Of the lake, that mirrors the sky ;
And the silver ripple, to lull her to rest,
Is murmuring ‘ Lullaby.’

“ And the moon-beams revel the dark leaves between,
Like spirits of mystery;
And a thousand wood-nymphs might lurk unseen
In the shade of the sycamore tree.

“ Beautiful scenes! when the mind is at rest,
'Twill form a mirror for thee;
As calm, as clear as yon lake's pure breast;
But the troubled heart, like the sea,

“ Reflects thee not. Wild thoughts, like waves,
Rush rapidly on each others' graves,
And the troubled, and the troubled sea,
Reflects not at all, or brokenly.

“ But when she passed the fold, where warm
And safe by its mother's side,
The young lamb lay—a thought of harm,
Of danger that might betide,

“ Made Emily pause—‘ Ah, why these fears ? ’
She cried, ‘ I will trust him, to night
He has sworn by the glittering star that he wears
To-morrow his vows he will plight !

“ ‘ To morrow, my mother ! a noble Knight's bride,
Shall Emily kneel to thee ; ’
And her trembling feet brushed the dew-drops aside,
And she reached the old trysting-trée.

“ *He was not there!* and the withering thought,
That he yielded in love to her,
Stole over her heart, and she eagerly sought
To conceal in the shades of the fir

“ Her trembling form, and as she knelt
Alone with the moon that night,
Her pale cheek told that the maiden felt,
That love is not all delight!

“ O'er the moonlit glade, comes a lengthening shade ;
There's a horse's tread—Tis he !—
And a coy thought came, half frolic, half shame,
And she sighed, ‘ *he shall seek for me !* ’

“ ‘ *She is not here !* ’ In an angry voice,
As he leapt from his steed, he cried ;
And the moon shone down on his angry frown,
And the gentle Emily sighed.

“ The first angry frown of the brow that we love,
Oh, how much of wo is it worth !
The throb of her heart made her mantle move,
But the maiden came not forth.

“ Then a silver whistle he took from his breast,
And uttered a low clear sound ;
And it roused the deer from their slumb'ring rest,
And as Emily gazed around,

“ To her beautiful brow rushed the boiling blood,
Convulsed was her bosom's swell ;
For slowly from 'neath the underwood,
Came one whom she knew too well !

“ Yes, shuffling along with his crab-like gait,
Came the hunchback clown who had sighed
For Emily's hand : ‘ Sir Knight, I wait ;
I have done your bidding,’ he cried :

“ ‘By the river’s side are horses and guide,
To carry the maiden away ;
And I in disguise will pilot your prize ;
But where does she tarry, I pray ?’

“ ‘Tis strange,’ the knight cried, ‘though she wept
and sighed,
She vowed she would hence to-night,
And await me where I ventured to swear,
To-morrow my vows I would plight ;’

“ ‘ And I shall plight such vows as knight
May plight to a cottage maid.’
A faint feeling came over Emily’s frame,
And her heart grew chill. Then said

“ The Knight of the Star—‘ It is late, and far
She must journey ere rises the sun ;
And so I will roam towards her cottage home,
Perchance I may meet her anon.

“ ‘ No time have I for tear or for sigh,
I must see her on her way ;
And then hasten where waits a wealthier fair,
For my bride will not brook delay.’

“ He fastened his steed to the very tree
That concealed the trembling maid :
‘ Hunchback, beware that she does not see thee—
To thy post !’ And they left the glade.

“ ‘ Queen of the Night, how I bless thy light,’
Cried the maid, as a wild hope rush’d
Through her whirling brain ; and again, and again,
Her heart’s quick throbbing she hushed.

- “ She thought of the by-path that led through the
grove,
It was known to her lover's steed :
She feared not the river, for ford it he could,
And then she were safe indeed.
- “ Now, snorting, as proud of his burden light,
The horse treads the winding lea ;
And glorious and bright shone the Queen of the Night,
For the daughter of Purity.
- “ The ford is passed : she has reached at last,
The fold where the young lamb lay ;
A few moments glide, and she kneels by the side
Of her sleeping mother to pray.
- “ Then she sought again her bower, and when
All hushed were her bosom's fears,
Mingled joy and grief sought nature's relief,
In a passionate burst of tears.
- “ As she sunk on the ground, a well-known sound
Made her start, and a voice from the grove
Sighed, ‘ Emily dear, I'm awaiting you here ;
Oh ! why do you tarry, my love ?
- “ ‘ The moon shines bright, to assist our flight,
My Emily, linger not ;
A princely tower shall be your bower,
Then leave this lowly cot.’
- “ To the lattice she stole, and the pride of her soul
Flash'd forth from her beautiful eye ;
And the knight thought ‘ Ne'er was maiden so fair,
Ne'er lover so blest as I.’

“ ‘ If the moon shines bright,’ she cried, ‘ Sir Knight,
‘ Tis to light you on your way
To the castle, where waits thy dowered fair,
For thy bride will not brook delay! ’ ”

There was a mingled pathos and archness in the young poetess’s recitation, that added greatly to the effect of her ballad. The painter dropped his brush, and Miss Trueblue her needle. Luccilla, to escape the admiring and too eloquent gaze of the former, hastened to the window. She stood there for a short time, but suddenly withdrew, so pale, and looking so scared, that Di Moricini darted towards her, and Miss Trueblue asked, in wild alarm, if she felt ill? Luccilla made no reply, but sinking on the couch, took a glass of water the young artist offered her. Her colour did not quite return, and her spirits seemed gone; no inquiries could induce her to explain what had so shocked and disturbed her. She seemed anxious to depart, and hurried Miss Trueblue away. The young artist implored her to leave her MSS. with him, and she placed them in his hand, but in an

absent and abstracted manner. Di Moricini looked pale, anxious, and wretched—so much so, that the kind Miss Trueblue invited him to come to tea on the next day, and pressed Lucilla to meet him. Declining any refreshments, the ladies rose, and were soon *en route*. The young artist's look of reproachful inquiry haunted Lucilla through the after-day, but at that moment she did not heed it. After a few moments spent in irresolution, Lucilla threw herself back in the carriage, and burst into tears. Miss Trueblue bent over her affectionately, and by earnest entreaty, induced the agitated girl to reveal the cause of her distress. “ You were so cheerful, dearest, till you went to the window; what could you possibly have seen? ”

“ The only thing that could have so disturbed me,” said Lucilla; “ I saw that bold, designing, and terrible man, whom I never see without a shudder, and yet seem doomed to see everywhere—whom I feel to be my evil genius, and yet have no power to shun.”

“What Lord Trelawney?”

“Yes, and with a look of such cunning and depraved insolence.”

“But still, dearest, I see no cause for such extreme alarm and distress. He might have been passing by accident.”

“Passing! Oh, had that been all, I should not have heeded the incident much, though his aspect always dismays me; but he was not passing. No, no! When I went to the window, I stood there for a few minutes without perceiving anything, and then my eye was caught by the dazzling rays of the sun playing on the tube of a telescope in a drawing-room opposite. That telescope was held by that dreadful man; of course he was there to watch us, and I doubt not he had been thus engaged ever since we entered the room. I well remember a bill announcing apartments to be let, furnished, in that very house, the very last time I saw it, and indeed, in that very window. So you see the wretch must have taken the rooms,

merely to be a spy on our proceedings. Think, dearest friend, how dreadful to feel oneself thus dogged and haunted by such a man. Would he take all this trouble without some terrible design ; and how is it to all end ? ”

“ Nay, my love, do not distress yourself thus ; if you do not expose yourself to danger, the man cannot harm you. Keep as quiet as you can for a week, and then you shall leave Town with us, and will quite mislead him as to our destination, for, I doubt not, he will inquire or cause some of his gang—for I can call them nothing else—to inquire where we are gone. But now cheer up, dearest ; with a little prudence and cunning we shall outwit the wretch, and in England people are not easily carried off against their will.”

By degrees Lucilla recovered from her alarm, and then she began (being, as all imaginative people are, an ingenious self-tormentor) to tease herself about her cold and abrupt departure from the artist’s.

CHAPTER XIV.

“As you are not very well, dear Lucilla,” said Miss Trueblue, “suppose we drive round the Parks. The scene may amuse you; it is one I generally shun; I hate to see the impertinent surprise and disappointment of the men about Town when peering into the chariot, and expecting to see a beauty, they beheld the poor little hunchback (who, however, pays them back their contempt with interest); but to-day I shall have no such feeling,” she added, while an amiable triumph in another’s beauty lighted her eyes; “I think I may defy both the Parks to

produce a fairer or a sweeter face than that I am going to show them. Come, Lucilla, if beauty has its perils and its pains, it has its pleasures too. There, smile ; put on your bonnet a little more *d la coquette*—smooth your golden ringlets, and put on this cachmere. There, now you are a first-rate *élégante*. Now we will go and get an ice at Gunter's, and then drive round the Parks.

Miss Trueblue was right ; the beautiful, and, better still, the “new” face of Lucilla attracted universal admiration and excited general curiosity ; and in the pleasure of being gazed at and admired, Lucilla forgot her griefs ; old beaux, who had probably ogled her grandmother, fixed upon her a gaze, the same, yet oh, how different ; young Englishmen stared, and foreigners glanced at her ; the stare conveyed much conceited approbation—the glance, much reverential admiration. Miss Trueblue was as much interested in every new conquest of Lucilla's, as the smiling, animated girl herself ; a

landau passed, and five or six heads bowed, and as many faces smiled—It was the Temples', of Temple Grove, who seeing Lucilla in so elegant a carriage, and so nicely dressed, kissed their hands most eagerly to her. Then came an aristocratic coach, with a coronet on the panels, with servants powdered and in costly liveries; an elegant middle-aged lady was in it, and several lovely children looked from the windows. Looking through their flower-like faces, Lucilla beheld Renard Undermine seated by the lady's side, and a beautiful little girl on his knee, pulling his whiskers, and playfully slapping his face.

"How strange it is," said Lucilla, "that Mr. Renard Undermine should be so intimate with people of such distinction."

"There is some mystery in it," said Miss Trueble; "that is an Earl's coronet, and you see he is quite at home in the Earl's carriage."

Renard perceiving them, put his head out,

and waved his hand to show where he was, and the playful little child did the same.

“ Oh, he is evidently very intimate with that family,” said Lucilla, “ and then that beautiful girl, daughter of some nobleman, whom he calls Lady Cis., and who positively gave him a lock of such exquisite golden hair; I cannot think how he gets the *entrée* of such houses, for I think him the most vulgar, disagreeable creature.”

“ Oh, so he is: I am sure there is some mystery in it, I console myself with Madam De Maintenon’s remark, ‘ *Songez qu’a la fin, tout est su,*’ and I soothe my feminine curiosity by the conviction, it will come out some day—there must be some excellent reason why people of importance tolerate such a little upstart. I should really like to fathom it; he must I think, be a money lender.”

At this moment Sir Felix Archer drove by; he looked pale and care-worn, but on seeing Lucilla, actually coloured, and kissed his hand;

a few minutes after, a footman from his carriage came running up with a bouquet, and a message, saying, "That Sir Felix, when he saw Miss Temple, was going to call on her with the nosegay, but seeing her in the Park, would do himself that honour some other day; he hoped she would not be late at his dinner-party, the next day." Lucilla sent him a polite message of thanks, &c., and divided the exquisite flowers with Miss Trueblue.

"Ah, now I know he is not the chosen one," she said; "if he were, you would not part with one leaf, one bud, no not one thorn offered by him."

Little did they know, as they laughingly divided the flowers, how much selfish anguish was in the worldly donor's heart. Those flowers came from Felix Park—that place now the object of so much alarm and solicitude. Sir Felix had been there early in the morning, and brought them thence; never had the place looked so enchanting, never had he loved it so

well. "How lovely," he thought, "would Lucilla, as Lady Archer, look on that terrace, or walking on that parterre, rowing on that exquisite water, sweeping over those lawns, or gliding, supported by my arm, through these woods! How would she grace these drawing-rooms, how shine at the head of this banqueting hall! I never, never, can resign the place; I do think I would rather, if the whole affair cannot be compromised and hushed up, purchase it of my odious nephew, at his own price, and retire here for ever with Lucilla. At any rate, I will see her here; she shall see the place in all its glory. The Temples shall spend a week here; and here, still master of the enchanting place, I will propose to make the poor Lucilla Temple, Lady Archer! They will not proceed at once, and I feel almost sure, that Ferret and Scrape only require a bribe." But in spite of all this, Sir Felix Archer was ill at ease; all this bribing and compromising was very different to having, as he had always

believed he had, a clear and undisputed right to the estate. However, Sir Felix thought of his party, and that nothing makes people look worse than fretting; so he culled the choicest of bouquets from his spacious conservatories for Lucilla, and every flower had a thorn. With those flowers, Lucilla and Miss Trueblue were now sporting.

"Shall we leave this crowded drive, dearest?" said Miss Trueblue, suddenly; "you have made every man your lover, and every woman your foe. Suppose we drive round the park."

Lucilla agreed with more outward alacrity than she felt; but though beautiful, she was not selfish, and she remembered that the scene, so full of varied and personal interest to the admired *belle*, might be one of monotonous pain and mortification to the despised hunchback. In this she was mistaken: Miss Trueblue felt a lively interest in Lucilla's triumphs; but along the banks of the Serpentine, her quick eye had caught a tall and gaudily-dressed

figure ; though indistinct in the distance, her heart foreboded whose it was. Poor Dorcas Trueblue! She only wished to be certain, to exchange one smile, to catch one kind glance of those beloved eyes! How slowly the carriage moves, how quick her heart beats ; the horses crawl, her fancy gallops ; they can go no faster—they are in a line ; it is ten minutes before they leave the drive. How eagerly Miss Trueblue looks from the carriage window! Lucilla cannot understand her anxiety, but suddenly the poor little hunchback draws back, puts her hands before her eyes, and utters first a sharp cry, and then a low moan of extreme pain. Lucilla looked from the window, and in one moment she understood her friend's anguish. On a bench was seated the handsome object of Miss Trueblue's boundless but ill-placed love, Frederick Smirk, and by his side a smart, pretty-looking girl, whose hand he held in true lover-like style, and whom he was evidently courting, in the most approved style of that class ; one arm

was round her neat and slender waist, and his fine eyes were fixed upon her.

Lucilla felt for her friend, but was not without a hope that such a discovery might cure so superior and gifted a woman of a partiality so degrading and injurious to her ; for beyond his mere personal beauty, and a sort of weak good-nature, this fellow seemed to have nothing to recommend him. His love was evidently assumed, and that powerful charm with the unloved, the captivating conviction of being beloved by, and necessary to another, must fade from Miss Trueblue's heart, now she had seen him 'courting' another. Lucilla feared to look round, but presently, Miss Trueblue's hand dropped from her face ; Lucilla turned to her, in haste and terror. The poor deformed one's face was as the face of the dead—she had fainted. Lucilla rested the sufferer's head on her bosom, fanned her, applied a vinaigrette to her nostrils, and Eau-de-Cologne to her temples, and in a little while the sense of existence and of anguish

returned. The tears of a disappointed heart coursed each other down the pallid cheeks of the unloved. She pressed Lucilla's hand, and said—"I do not blame him! how could it be otherwise? Who would love me? Forgive this disgraceful weakness. I am calm now—now and for ever. Let us go home—home! Ah, where there is no love, there is no home."

"Oh, do not say there is no love," said Lucilla; "think of your father—think of me!"

"True, I would not be ungrateful; but he did seem to love me with that love, which it is the instinct of woman's heart to covet. Oh, I am sure he loved me; perhaps some wiles have estranged him, and of late I have not written to him, have sent him no token by which he may know, that spite of all opposition, all absence, all difficulties, I am unchanged."

Lucilla did not speak—she was disappointed—she had no idea of

"This unrequited tenderness,
Living on its own sweet excess ;"

—this changing faith, this blind devotion. Flattered, courted, loved from her cradle, as the beautiful in all stations always are, she could not conceive the power of the only eyes that even looked fondly on the woman, whatever the tongue might have professed to the heiress. However, she saw this empty, contemptible man's affections, was, with the poor little hunchback a matter of life and death. She had made an idol of this silly, handsome coxcomb, and her own void and poetical fancy had lent it a thousand god-like attributes. Lucilla had not the heart to undeceive, to rob her of the sweet delusion of her life. "So beautiful, so very beautiful, as he is," said Miss Trueblue, "he must be so followed, so courted; and it is so difficult for a man to repel, even where he does not love: it is woman's nature to do so. That horrid girl was evidently (perhaps against her will) making love to him. Is he not exquisitely handsome, Lucilla?"

"He is certainly very good-looking."

"Good-looking! you might as well call the Apollo Belvidere good-looking."

"Well, then, I think him extremely handsome, but (be not offended) I think he wants that, without which no beauty in a man can interest me, an aristocratic air, and intellectual expression."

"Indeed!" said Miss Trueblue, with an hysterical gasp; "what next?" and there was such sharp resentment in her usually kind eyes, that Lucilla drew back frightened.

"Nay, I did not mean to offend you," said Lucilla, a little roused, as she thought she read a kind of defiance in Miss Trueblue's expression, and something very like a sneer on her lip; "but your anger emboldens me to say, what in your sorrow I had not the heart to tell you. I think Mr. Smirk may have good-nature, as he certainly has uncommonly good looks, but I consider him every way beneath you; and if anything would in the least diminish my boundless respect, esteem, and affection for you, it

would be the seeing so gifted, so cultivated, and so respectably-connected a lady lavish the love any man might be proud to win, on one whom I cannot but think a silly plebeian and low-born TAILOR! Now that is what I have often wished to say to you, but till you roused me I never could rouse myself to do it. I add to this, that I believe he is a coxcomb and a flirt, and that in nourishing for him the preference you do, you sacrifice to a very doubtful love, the devoted affection of a life, namely your father's. You disobey the first commandment with promise, and I fear you will find, if you do not resign this unhappy attachment, that you have 'sown the wind, and that you will reap the whirlwind.'"

As Lucilla spoke with unwonted animation—she usually so gentle and so meek—Miss True-blue listened in amazement, but with a respect she had never felt before for her young friend. What nettled her woman-heart, were the epithets, "silly," "low-born," and "a tailor," and

these she therefore proceeded to combat. With regard to Frederick's being silly, she said, "I can only say that, in worldly conduct many of the most gifted have been so styled, but that I know him to be not only not silly, but a *GENIUS!* To establish this I need only show you some of his compositions—wild, irregular, and unpolished, perhaps—but full of that originality and fancy which constitute *genius*.

Lucilla bit her lips to hide her smiles.

"Plebeian and low-born he certainly is not; and I see you are biassed by a preconceived notion. In his beautiful veins flows the noblest blood the Norman boasts!"

"How so?" asked Lucilla, with unfeigned surprise.

"His father was the son of a Duke."

"Impossible!"

"Nay, most true. Not the lawful son, alas! else how different had been my Frederick's fate. But the blood of the oldest family in England flows in his veins."

"And his father—what was he?"

His father, provided for and pushed on in some degree by his noble relatives, was an officer. Under a promise of marriage, he seduced a poor and innocent girl. He inherited the beauty, the fascination, and the vices of his ancestors. Of that unhappy girl Frederick is the son; but while I deplore the treachery which has made him illegitimate and an outcast, I cannot conceal from myself that he is the grandson of a Duke. He may be a tailor, but the blood of the Plantagenets warms his heart and colours his cheek. There are two bars sinister in his escutcheon, and twenty in his fate; but in every glance of his proud and beautiful eyes, I see the old Norman. Every limb is cast in a Patrician mould; every movement has a sort of chivalrous grace; his thoughts too, are all full of romantic daring. He loved me; yes, he did love me; and feeling he was the descendant of a Duke, he thought it no such great presumption to love a clothier's daughter,

because he loved me with the bold, wild love of his ancient race. My father dismissed and degraded him. To avoid beggary or a work-house, he became, not a tailor, for he never held a needle in his fingers—fingers in whose delicate and taper form I read his origin—but foreman to a tailor. But what matter if he were a working-tailor, he would still be the descendant of the De ——y's—he would still be the descendant of a Duke."

Lucilla did not speak. To her mind, the legitimate son of a legitimate tinker was better than this base-born son of a base-born son of a Duke. But she knew that things of no form and dignity Love can transpose to form and quality. The enamoured imagination of Miss Trueblue had fastened on her Frederick's irregular descent from the great of yore; and doubtless Frederick himself, who was not without his cunning and the love of boast so common to the weak mind, had improved on this strange prepossession.

"I think, she" said, "you will own now that he connot well be called plebeian or low-born ; I hope yet one day to place him, if not in the rank of his ancestors, at least in one where his genius will be appreciated, and where he will shine a model of aristocratic beauty and Patri-cian grace. I think, Lucilla, I have now exonerated myself from your charge of loving a silly, low-born plebeian—of loving with a wild, a boundless, a passionate love, in secrecy and in sorrow, in disobedience to—nay, in defiance of—the very best and kindest of parents. Of that charge I cannot clear my fond and wilful heart ; and I am so wedded to this ambrosial and beguiling sin, that wretched as this devotion makes me, wild and pure as are my struggles between love and duty, and dearly as I reverence and cherish my father, I would not cease to love, even if I could, and yet it is indeed—

" A passion without hope or pleasure,
In my soul's darkness buried deep ;
It lies like some ill-gotten treasure,

Some idol without shrine or name ;
O'er which its pale-eyed vot'ries keep
Unhallowed watch, while others sleep."

" You will hardly believe, oh, Lucilla ! that one of the very causes of my father's immovable opposition and enmity to Frederick is his illustrious, though I own irregular, descent. He has often wounded my ears by declaring that the legitimate son of a hangman ranked higher than Frederick. But this struggle cannot last for ever, from fifteen to this time that I am three-and-twenty, I have loved Frederick, and Frederick only ; and till this miserable day, he, all beautiful, all bewitching as he is, has never cost me one jealous pang. Ah, Lucilla ! we may endure the pleasing anguish of love, but the poisoned darts of jealousy we cannot brave, and live. Till now, I have sacrificed Frederick to my father, but I feel this cannot be much longer."

" Oh, do not talk so wildly, dearest !" said Lucilla ; " forgive aught I may have said in a warmth which has offended. Remember your

father's feeble health, remember that a shock—particularly such a shock as your desertion and disobedience would be—would perhaps cost him his life ; and you, oh, more than life : all peace, all self-approval, all joy on earth, all hope in Heaven ! Think what remorse would dog you to the grave. Think if the Recording Angel had to give in such a verdict of black ingratitude against the best of parents, no Angel of Mercy would blot such a record out.” The water sparkled in Lucilla’s eyes, and unwittingly she clasped her hands.

Miss Trueblue melted into tears, and said—“Ah, would you were ever near me to strengthen me against myself. ‘*Ma vie est un combat*,’ and they stopped at her door. Miss Trueblue looked to the drawing-room windows ; a large elderly man was standing there, evidently watching. He looked ill, but smiled, nodded, and waved his hand affectionately when he saw Miss Trueblue. “Poor papa, how ill he looks,” said Miss Trueblue, kissing her hand to him.

"Oh, miss!" said Miss Trueblue's maid, coming out, "your papa has been so anxious for you, and so hill and hirritable, it's been almost too much for my narves; there ain't no doing nothing to please him, and if he've asked for you once, he have asked for you fifty time."

"Farewell, then, dearest! for the present," said Miss Trueblue, "the carriage shall take you home as you wish it, and call for you at seven to come to tea; so mind you are ready."

CHAPTER XV.

“ Is there anywhere you wish to go, Miss?” said the footman, who was very partial to Lucilla, and rather proud of attending “ on such a beauty.”

At first, Lucilla said, “ Only home, I thank you, Jacob ;” but then she remembered some articles for fancy-works, which she wanted to get in the Pantheon ; and she told Jacob to drive her there.

The Pantheon ! it is really a very pretty place, concentrating all sorts of elegant knick-

knacks, scarcely to be met anywhere else, forming a pleasant lounge in bad weather ; rich in flowers, birds, pictures, and a thousand pretty nothings ; and yet, no one ever seems to go there, who has any other place to go to ; so much, that a wit, has justly named it, “ The Refuge for the Destitute ; ” people who have no carriage, no friends, and often no money, lounge in ; but as a regular resort of fashionable purchasers, it seems quite deserted. For this reason, Lucilla felt no particular dislike to going there alone ; and Jacob good-humouredly suggested, that she should walk through the Pantheon ; and, that he should take the carriage round to the entrance in Marlborough Street, where she could step in.

“ Are you in any hurry to get home, Jacob ? ” said Miss Temple.

“ Oh, no, miss ! take your time, miss—its no odds to us ! ”

Lucilla went in. Though a fine day, and though Town was full, nothing could be more

quiet and gloomy than the entrance ; a sort of twilight showed some stone statues, antique vases, and specimens in Terra-Cotta, and Gallo-Antico ; a beautiful female figure asleep on a mattress (carved in stone), seemed the presiding Genius of the place ; and coming from the bustling world, and garish day, it seemed almost like entering a vault. Lucilla passed through the cool and gloomy entrance, and pushing open a glass door protected by brass gratings, it swung noiselessly on its hinges, and she stood in the Bazaar itself ; but here, too, a sleepy dullness reigned—the counters were hung with every kind of bauble, showy knickknack, pretty toy, and inviting trifle ; bazaar girls, or bazaarians, as they call themselves, always neatly and often coquettishly dressed, came eagerly and watchfully up if Lucilla paused a moment even to look at any article exhibited ; and, angry at having sold little or nothing, seemed to revenge themselves by looking suspicious that our Lucilla came

there not to buy, but to steal. Showy and trumpery jewellery seemed placed as if purposely to hook itself on to fringes of shawls and mantles; and had the rooms been crowded, one could not have steered clear of them, and would probably have been politely requested to step into the matron's room to be examined as a shoplifter, and shown up in the police reports the next day; but as it was, there was room enough: none were there but a few solitary old maids, taking with their weary eyes patterns of new specimens of fancy-work, by which they earned a scanty subsistence; a few bare-legged children, in flap leghorn hats and feathers, and short tunics, dragged along by cross governesses; and one or two country parties, who ranked the Pantheon among the Lions of London: these formed all the company of a place so prettily decorated, so conveniently situated, and so very well arranged. These people stared, and the bazaarians popped, up with provoking suspicious faces, and asked

“ What shall I do for you, mem ? ” but purchasers there seemed to be none. There hung pretty dresses for children, braided as by fairy fingers ; neat and showy caps of every variety, cuffs, and mittens, and purses of every hue, shape, and texture ; aprons worthy of Titania, so neat and so fanciful ; and gay little reticules, that would just hold a small square of laced cambric, and perhaps a *billet doux*, glittering with beads of glass or steel, or worked in a thousand varieties of shaded silks, coloured braids, or penny riband ; and every kind of pincushion, and pen wiper. It was wonderful how much inventive genius was displayed in things that seemed to a casual observer to admit of no flights of fancy ; each stall seemed richly piled with its own peculiar wares—Victoria dolls, Albert dolls, Prince of Wales, Princess Royal, Princess Alice, and even Prince Alfred dolls, with real hair and moving tongues and eyes, stared at the few who stared at them. Flowers of Loveliness, and Galleries of

Beauty, smiled in vain from the print stalls ;
perfumery enriched the air.

“ The Tortoise there, and Elephant unite ;
Transformed to combs, the speckled and the white.”

There, British plate made a goodly but de-lusive show ; for if all that’s bright must fade, of all bright things, British plate fades the soonest. Ices melted away, and cakes and tarts hardened and withered in the close and sultry air.

Lucilla soon provided herself with the silks and beads she needed, and then, being a passionate lover of the Arts, she bethought her of taking a view of that exhibition, whose chief merit is—that it is “ gratis ;” for, to the poor Temple, even a shilling was an object of not little consideration.

Some of these pictures are certainly most daring daubs, but some have merit, and Lu-cilla gazed at them with interest ; but while looking at a large picture, before which a gentle-man stood, it suddenly struck her, that his

figure bore an alarming resemblance to Lord Trelawney's. The same giant limbs and thick-set neck ; the same broad shoulders and closely-curved chesnut locks ; the same green cut-away and sporting-looking cravat ; and, oh, horror ! oh, certainly the same curious cane, with a silver horse's head by way of top.

Lucilla's very heart stood still, as noiselessly, and, she hoped unperceived, she hurried out of the room before he turned round. Could he have followed her, and, knowing she would pass through that room, have placed himself there to surprise her ! She almost ran through the picture rooms, and down the stairs ; she hears steps behind her, nearer and nearer ; she felt a hand upon her shoulder, and a voice in her ear exclaims, " Miss Temple, I must speak to you." Now, Lucilla was very inexperienced, and very imaginative. Miss Trueblue's account of Lord Trelawney and his exploits, had worked upon her girlish and romantic fancy, and her ignorance of the world made her

tremble, when no cause of fear really was. A little more knowledge of realities, and a little less romance, would have prevented the dreadful and disabling terror which emboldened Lord Trelawney to attempt, for there was no one near, to pass his arm round Lucilla's waist ; but, at this startling and audacious insult, poor Lucilla recovered some degree of energy, though before, she had been clinging half-fainting to the balustrades of the large staircase, above which is placed that strange large picture by Westall, "The Raising of Lazarus," which (whatever its imperfections) has this merit, that once seen, it is never forgotten.

We have said that Lucilla's indignation, when she felt the bold hand of Lord Trelawney on her waist, was such as to conquer all terror, all timidity ; she turned round and confronted him with a face, deadly pale it is true, but the pallor was that of indignation, not fear ; the water sparkled in her eyes, and all the pride of her ancestors curved her lips, as she said—

“ Lord Trelawney, as you are a man of rank, it is right to suppose you are a gentleman ; and as such, I cannot do better than appeal to your chivalry, to protect me against such persecutions as no man of honour would offer to a lady, who acknowledges his power to terrify, and to wound her ; and yet implores him to shield her even against himself.”

“ Nay, my dear Miss Temple ; ” stammered his Lordship, a little “ taken aback,” “ I am sure a few minutes’ quiet conversation would make you see that I have no wish to persecute you ; that I desire nothing better than to be honoured by the name of your protector.”

The hidden meaning of these words escaped Lucilla, who might have been taken in by them, had not the bold manner of the man, as he tried to take her hand, convinced her all was not right. Her woman instinct supplied the want of experience, as she said—“ I need not inform your Lordship, that it is an insult to address

any lady to whom you have not been formally introduced."

"Now, there you're wrong—are, upon my honour, as you'll own, when you know a little more of the world—the fashionable world; there's nothing so obsolete as an introduction. But as you insist on it, so be it, then; I'll introduce myself. Lord Trelawney! Miss Temple! But upon my word, after fighting your battles, and risking my neck, drawn with you in the most crazy of old hackney coaches, it's very cruel of you to treat me like a stranger! It is, indeed."

"Sir! you *are* quite a stranger to me," faltered poor Lucilla, almost in tears.

"Well, that's your fault, not mine; if you were half as willing to become acquainted as I am, we should soon make it out, and be capital friends! Now, don't be silly; it must come to that—it will come to that."

"It will *never* come to that," said Lucilla.

"Why, that's giving me the lie; oh, fie! and

you a teacher, my dear ! Why, that's very bad manners, indeed." And he watched her with his sly, malicious, glittering glance, to see if he had roused her, for his object was to put her in a passion, and lose her self-command.

" It is true," said Lucilla, clasping her hands, and the tears gushing from her eyes, " the necessities of my parents have induced me to turn my talents to account—"

" And" (interrupted Lord Trelawney, in a coaxing and sarcastic tone) " to give instruction, on moderate terms, in Italian, French, and German, Music, Drawing, and Dancing, History, Geography, and the Use of the Globes."

" But," continued poor Lucilla, " I am as well born as yourself, and—"

" And *better bred*, I dare say ! "

" I hope so ! at any rate, I could never add to the troubles of the defenceless and afflicted."

" Come ! come ! come ! I'll show you an ante-room through the conservatory, where, if you'll indulge me with half an hour's conversation, I

have no doubt we shall perfectly understand each other."

"Lord Trelawney," said Lucilla, "in two minutes I can make myself understood. I have hitherto refrained from complaining of your insulting persecutions to my father, because he has, God knows, too many sorrows already; but, unless you immediately desist from tormenting and insulting me, I shall let him know all that has passed; and I am quite sure—for he has powerful friends—that I can be protected."

"Well, didn't I offer to protect you?"

"With regard to your offering me any further outrage here, I warn you not to attempt it; there must be some people to whom the injured can apply, in a public place like this; and if you presume to address me or touch me again, I will make my case known to the woman of the Bazaar. If you had attempted to steal a toy, you would have been immediately in the hands of the police; and you shall not, with impunity,

rob me of my good name, and spotless reputation, which must be impaired by your insulting persecutions. Now let me pass you, my Lord, and detain me no more ; I will instantly cry out for help,"

Lord Trelawney, who had recently figured in a police report, and that under peculiarly ridiculous and disgraceful circumstances, did not wish so soon to be held up again to public derision. He saw Lucilla was in earnest, so drawing back, and politely bowing, he said, " You are very severe, Madam, on a poor fellow who, fairly captivated by your charms, wished with all reverence to tell you so ; I hope you will never repent of this severity—but I have done —it is the last time. You shall escape me," (he added, in a hissing whisper), as Lucilla, looking at him with ineffable scorn, swept past him, and with as much speed as she thought consistent with dignity and defiance, made her way through the conservatories and ante-room into the carriage that awaited her.

CHAPTER XVI.

LORD TRELAWNEY stood for a moment looking very silly indeed. He had been, in his own slang, “done,” “done brown,” “done uncommonly brown;” made to look “small,” and “shady,” and all sorts of disagreeable things. “What would W—— say? and what would D—— think? and how C—— would sneer, and J—— laugh.” Still so it was, and for a moment his bullying impudence forsook him.

“I couldn’t kick up a shindy here,” he said to himself, as a sort of apologetic soliloquy; “I should have had all the women in the ba-

zaar screaming in chorus, if that little jade had set them going. By Jove, though, I'll pay her out for this. I declare, though, the girl's a regular *brick*, a *bear*; by Jove, she is! How she flared up when I touched her! I declare I'm more in love with her than ever. What a wife she'd make! A woman who can take care of her own honour will never endanger a husband's. Pshaw! wife indeed! what a spooney thought. If I ever do marry, it must be some one who has the blunt, and can redeem the old castle, acres, and estate. A daily teacher, too! Little vixen! she ought to feel highly honoured. But full of old romances—Pamela and Clarissa Harlowe! Still, I'll never give her up. If I do envy, I—but what's this. Ah, ah! dropped by her. Come; all stratagems are fair in love and in war, and this is both love and war."

So saying, he picked up a little black silk bag, which Lucilla, in her terror, had dropped on the stairs. Lord Trelawney really coloured up with excitement and pleasure as he put the

little shabby-looking relic in the breast-pocket of his coat—for he was in love. That Lucilla had a strange knack of making all sorts of people in love with her; no matter how different in age or character, they were alike in that. Sir Felix Archer was in love with her; so was Renard Undermine; so was Di Moricini; so was Lord Trelawney; so——; but we anticipate.

It was not merely her beauty, for beauty of every kind is common enough. Take one walk up and down Regent Street in the Season, one drive round the Parks in the warm and bloom-bestowing June, and you will own that this is indeed “The Isle of Beauty;”—beauty in every style, every variety; and yet beauty alone never excites the sort of love Lucilla awoke in the least loving hearts. Nor was it talent, goodness, genius, grace; they might assist to form an harmonious and irresistible whole; but there was an indescribable load-star in the young Lucilla, now and then, but very rarely, bestowed by Beauty on her most

favoured daughters. It won upon you, you knew not how ; captivated, you knew not when ; and subdued, you knew not why.

Sir Felix had passed season after season, unscathed by women of more dazzling and perfect beauty—more striking and finished talents ; yet, he was in love for the first time.

Lord Trelawney, before he gave himself up to lawless associates, and deeds of the bully and the bravo, had been an idol at Almack's, and a pet of the fair *élite*. In those days he had flirted, and since he had done worse ; but he had never felt any woman necessary to his happiness, till he saw Lucilla. Then, Renard Undermine—there was the greatest and the meanest triumph of her charms ; even that sordid little pettifogger would have wedded the penniless girl ; while Di Moricini, poor Di Moricini, his very soul is full of her ; his “ heart is darkened by her shadow ;” he pours forth his love in poetry and song ; his pencil is ever tracing her face, her form ; he goes over,

in memory, every word, every tone, every look of hers ; when she is gone, he begins to count the hours till he shall see her again ; his life is a restless watch. And Sir Felix's nephew ? events must speak for him. *Nous verrons !* as the French so lightly say, about events that may affect their destiny, or a world's destiny ; *nous verrons*, let us inquire what Lord Trelawney is doing with Lucilla's bag. Fearful of being joined and impeded by some one or other of his idle companions, Lord Trelawney called a cab, and ordered the driver to take him to his hotel in Pall Mall. Lord Trelawney had a handsome family mansion in St. James's Square ; an old house-keeper had the benefit of its spacious rooms and once costly but now antique furniture ; a set of bachelor rooms at an hotel in Pall Mall suited the free and easy taste of our young nobleman better, and hither he hastened with his prize ; in the cab he had taken it out, examined it, peeped in, and put it up again,

reserving it, like an epicure does a *bonne bouche*, till he could enjoy it at his ease. At length, he reached his hotel: a waiter came up to tell him that Black Sambo, Deaf Burke, with Lord Neck-or-Nothing, and Captain Rook, were in the drawing-room awaiting him.

An impatient oath met the waiter's ear ; he bowed and smiled as if it were a compliment, while his Lordship added, "They might wait," and wait they did; for mounting the stairs three or four steps at a time, Lord Trelawney listened for a moment at the drawing-room door, and heard they were sparring; and then he rushed up into his dressing-room, locked the door, and threw himself, panting, on the sofa.

CHAPTER XVII.

LORD TRELAWNEY's room betrayed the tastes of its inhabitant: portraits of horses, dogs, and boxers (who seemed the most brutal of the three) were hung around; hunting whips, boxing gloves, and foils, were piled up with knockers and bell handles, wrenched from doors, the result of a late midnight exploit. There lay a barber's poll and basin, and, greater triumph still, one of the wooden images of Highlanders in full costume, taken from a tobacconist's shop, with a daring skill and dexterity worthy of a better cause; a domino, a mask, a wig, a life-preserved, a pair of pistols,

and two or three bludgeons were on the table, in rude contrast with the glittering contents of a very costly dressing-case, displayed by his Lordship's valet, an old, staid, respectable looking man, the last person in the world one would have expected to see in such a situation as valet to Lord Trelawney—but thereby hangs a tale. His Lordship nearly ran over him, as he hurried into his dressing-room, but he did not swear, as he had done at the waiter; he only said—“Stand out of the way, there's a good old bird, will you?”

The old man respectfully drew back, and when the door was locked, said, “I wonder what's in the wind now—not another duel, I hope; if it is, I'll find it out, and give the police notice. Poor boy, he looked pale!” Then tapping gently, he said, in answer to an impatient “Who's there!” “Does your Lordship require my assistance.”

“No, Abel, thank you; I'll ring when I want you.”

And so the old valet retired into the ante-room, there to watch and wait.

Lord Trelawney doubted and paused for a moment, for even he *knew* what was right; but the next he yielded, and emptied the contents of the bag on the sofa. First came an attenuated purse, with two leaden-looking sixpences, and a bright “fourpenny bit;” then the beads and silks Lucilla had purchased in the Bazaar; then a few halfpence done up in whity-brown paper; a miniature in a small crimson case—some favoured lover’s, doubtless—and Trelawney felt he could stamp on both it and its original; he opened it, fully expecting to see a self-conceited face, round eyes, pink cheeks, perhaps a white waistcoat, blue coat, and brass buttons; perhaps moustachios, scarlet, and epaulettes; but, no! the angel face of the young Lucilla seemed almost to blush beneath his gaze! Yes, there they are, and he can scan them at his ease, those soft and childlike features, those sloping violet eyes, those long loose curls of shaded gold, those arch

and scarlet lips. At one side "*Ipse fecit*" is written, and at the back, "Lucilla Temple, aged seventeen; painted by herself, for her dear friend, Dorcas Trueblue."

"Never shall that dear friend possess it," said his Lordship, taking up a little worn pocket-book:"

It was the "Christian Lady's Polite Remembrancer;" but for about fifteen years before.

However, it seemed to have been only recently used as a diary by Lucilla; for in a faded hand was written by Mrs. Temple, "Given me on the first day of the new year, by the best and dearest of husbands."

And the only insertion by the same hand was, "Lucilla, two years old to-day; the coals came in, two chaldrons; paid Norah's wages."

On another page was written, "Lucilla; given her, at her own request, by her dear mamma; an old pocket-book being better than none." And certainly Lucilla's pencil had not been

idle ; here an epigram, there a sonnet ; here a recipe, there a caricature ; here, an ostentatious “cash in hand,” 2*s.* 6*d.*; there, expenditure, a bun for mamma, 1*d.*; beggar, ditto; hair-pins, 2½*d.*; white gloves, 8½*d.* a pair—(mem.) worth nothing, split in all directions; strawberries for mamma 6*d.*; bouquet for ditto, 3*d.*; lent Tom, 2*d.*; stiff calico for a bustle, 3*d.*; muslin for a tucker, ditto ; and so on. Lord Trelawney, the squanderer of tens of thousands, laughed heartily over these penny purchases, so carefully noted down. It was strange how great an interest love lent to these girlish, and even childish memoranda, and with what avidity he ran his eye over the more recent parts of the Diary, to see if there was any mention of the meeting with himself.

It was like looking into the young girl’s secret heart, was this diving into the little private record, never meant to meet any human eye ; and the *naïvété*, the goodness, and the purity, revealed in many of the confessions, for

such they were, often made the bold, bad man, who was so dishonourably prying into them, blush at the contrast of such a nature with his own.

In one place there was a concise but humorous account of Sir Felix Archer's first visit, and the hopes it had given rise to, but we will give it in Lucilla's own words :—

" May 10th.—While sitting with papa—he invoking those old maids, the Muses, and I, that perverse bachelor, Apollo—we were both startled by a thundering knock at our door. A cab, a private cab, groom and all. I saw it from the window; a pair of delicate gray kid gloves held the snow-white reins. 'Who could it be?' said papa. I thought it might be the elegant young man I see wherever I go—come, oh romantic Lucilla! to ask of papa a daughter he has never spoken to! And there I was, in an old morning dress, my hair hanging about like Madge Wildfire's. Tried to escape. Papa forbade. In came an oldish beau. Papa's old

friend, Sir Felix Archer. Nice old dear ! he seemed much struck with me. Papa delighted. Poor dear papa ! he is so seldom pleased. I did my best to please Sir Felix, or rather poor papa. After a very long visit, *exit* Sir Felix. I see papa thinks I have made a conquest. Well, '*he* is not all my fancy painted.' What then ? Mamma's eyes sparkled as in fun ; papa called me Lady Archer. He is so rich. What would I not do for papa, and mamma, and Tom ? Oh, but how dull, how desolate, to marry without love ! Selfish Lucilla ! what ! make no sacrifice for such parents ? However, there's time enough for fretting ; you've not been asked yet. I fear I grow vain and egotistical. I damped and ironed my ribands, and re-trimmed my own bonnet, and forgot the little bed-gown for Betty Blake's baby. To atone, sate working at it in my room till midnight.

"May 11th.—Head-ache and heavy eyes from working late ; dreamt I was the Lady Bountiful of a beautiful village, giving away piles of baby-

clothes, red cloaks, straw bonnets, blankets, loaves, and cauldrons of soup. As Lady Archer, that might come to pass. How great a happiness to be able to afford to do all the good one's heart suggests. Mem.—Another item in his favour, should he propose. Spoke very cross to poor Tom. One fault always leads to another. Vanity made me trim my bonnet instead of making the poor baby's dress, and sitting-up made me ill and cross to-day. Gave Tom a bun to make up.

“ May 12th.—Eureka! a haunch of venison from Sir Felix Archer. I see papa and mamma augur all they cannot help writing, all I cannot help dreading, good luck as it would be for a poor child like me to marry such a great man. They do not speak, but their eyes are full of hope, that almost makes me weep. In writing out papa's sermon for him, his thoughts often wandered, and so did mine. Remarkable event of this reign—*Sir Felix Archer asked to dinner!* It is difficult to shine in the kitchen and the

drawing-room ; but there is no glory where there is no difficulty.

“ May 13th.—A dreadful day ! mamma poorly, Norah cross and contrary, Tom very provoking. Papa out all day visiting the poor and sick ; planned the dinner, went to market ; borrowed the baker’s silver forks, and the grocer’s spoons ; hired glasses, made a cap for dear mamma—white blonde, with blush roses—complete success ; how pretty she still is ! how beautiful she must have been ! and to have come to this ! My heart bled to see her in the damp kitchen, among rats and cockroaches, burning her delicate face over the fire, making the soup and the jelly ; how anxious and tired she is, and the jelly will not clear ; and the soup, I could not own it to her, but I do fear Norah has let it burn a little. Mamma and I at work all day, and yet there is so much to do to-morrow ; no time for dinner. Made mamma come to tea, and go to bed. Papa not in. After doing all I could towards the dinner,

valiantly set to, to iron my white muslin dress, and wash and curl my hair. Oh, that to-morrow were well over ! Tom unbearable !

" May 14th.—Of the important day there was no note, nor indeed for a week after, and then was written—

" May 22nd.—Thank God, she is out of danger. My dear, my blessed mother, I knew I loved you well, but, oh, I knew not half how well. Saved ! Oh, may my life be one long act of praise and thanksgiving to the merciful God, who has spared me a blow, I shudder even to think of. But she is saved ! The last week ! it seems an age since it began, and yet it is gone like a dream. Odious Sir Felix, he caused it all ; vain fool that I was ! he scarcely even looked at me ! I, who had been persuading myself to accept him. Never say 'no,' till you're asked ; sage advice of our quaint, cautious foremothers. Can I recall, the events of the dreadful day, a wretched day ? Mamma pale and poorly from the beginning, yet rest-

less and anxious ; would get up at six, and toil all day about the odious dinner for that odious man. My dress a bad colour by daylight, and much too stiff. Mamma at last so faint from the fire, I was obliged to take her place. Alas ! one may be born a poet, but one is not born a cook. The custards turned, I know not how or why ! Borrowed Jock, the tiger, to wait ; clever, but conceited and saucy ; made fun of our contrivances. Tom had a battle with him, and got a black eye—a great pity, as we hoped Sir Felix would have taken to Tom. But this accident made him look sinister, and proved him to be pugnacious. The wine kept us in suspense for hours. Papa in his anxiety knocked down the boy with the basket of hired glasses. Alas ! to punish me for my anxiety to look well, I looked horrid—never so bad in my life. Half dead with fatigue ; the fire, while I was cooking, caught my face, and no washing or fanning would cool it ; my nose and my eyelids were crimson, and so were my hands. My hair, from being

washed and pinned up, curled like a white negro's; brushing only made it worse! My dress stood out like a balloon. I spent my last sixpence in a bunch of lilies of the valley, but the heat soon made them droop.

"Before any one was ready, odious Sir Felix came. Jock, he says in mistake, I fear in spite, showed him into the back drawing-room, where mamma was washing. Coming hastily out, looking very sneering, he met me rushing down to Norah to get my dress fastened. He was stiff and cold all dinner. Dinner vile! Everything spoilt. He ate nothing. Saw tears in mamma's eyes. Waited long for him to come up to tea; he went away without. Papa in despair! He had refused to help him. Mamma—oh, can I write it?—all but taken from us; perhaps to show us, by a real grief, the miserable folly of fretting over trifles. May I never forget this awful lesson!"

Then came the account of the bill—Frederick Smirk—Miss Trueblue—The arrangement to

teach her—The Undermines—Sir Felix again—The young Painter—and after his introduction, much said of the wickedness and misery of marrying except for love; and soon Lord Trellawney saw his own name: his colour rose as he read—“Walked to Miss Trueblue’s, attended by Norah; she got into a row—true daughter of Erin; rescued by a strange being: at first, I fancied him some professional prize-fighter; it turns out that he is still worse—an amateur of that brutal pursuit. This man would be singularly handsome, but that his nose and front teeth are broken; there is a glitter in his eye, and a resolve in his mouth, that make me shudder. Frighted and thankful to him for his aid, I let him lead me like a child; but then, I knew not what a lawless, dreadful, wicked wretch he is! so desperate, so powerful, and with a whole club of companions, lawless ruffians like himself.

“Miss Trueblue says—‘That any heiress who excites their cupidity, or any poor

girl whom they admire for her beauty, they vow to obtain by stratagem or force, and are seldom foiled.' However, 'forewarned, fore-armed.' How I dread this terrible man! he seems to me as if he possessed the evil eye, the Italians tell us of—but, 'forewarned, fore-armed.' I would rather fall into a den of lions, than into the hands of Lord Trelawney and his vicious myrmidons. But again, I may presume, perhaps as in the case of Sir Felix, I fear without cause; but that was without cause, then, but not now. Now, I do believe, were my heart free, I might—"

"Were her heart free," Lord Trelawney started; "who then has won a delicious power over that noble, frank, and tender heart?" Can it be himself—oh, if it were! he almost fancies such happiness, such unlooked-for, undeserved happiness, would make him human, make him good—this were worth every sacrifice. Eagerly he reads on:—

"Were my heart free, I might become Lady

Archer ; but now, oh rash and weak Lucilla! now that thou hast so selfishly yielded to the dear delight of loving one beneath even thee, at least in the world's estimate ; a foreigner, an artist—all thy poor parents would most disapprove, most grieve over—now it is vain: princes would sue in vain now—now indeed it were perjury to swear to love another ! What then—I must toil daily for daily bread. My Muse seems to be an *ignis fatuus*, leading me into the Slough of Despond. I can never wed thee, thou dear one, and I will never wed another.

“ Mem.—Silk and blue beads for mamma's purse.

“ A small oval morocco-case and glass, for my miniature of myself, for Miss Trueblue.

“ One yard of cheap flannel for old Mary Webb's rheumatic leg.

“ One dose of James's Powder for little Nelly Trudge. Black cotton to darn papa's stockings.

“ A money-box for Tom.

"Mem.—To put a pink lining in my straw bonnet, before I go from home. I look so pale in the blue one."

There was much more in this style, and then there were some such notes as these :—

"Mem.—Not to wear my hair in ringlets walking to and from Miss Trueblue's, as it attracts attention. To try not to be flattered by passers-by, there being often, in reality, more of impertinence than admiration in it.

"To try to take no pride or delight in useless conquests. To love exciting amusements less, and quiet employment more.

"To think less of myself in every way, and more of others.

"Not to wear flowers or light gloves in the street, and never to wear dear Miss Trueblue's present the polka pelisse, except in the carriage with her.

"To ask Signor Di Moricini if has any interest in the magazines; to try to find out who his father really is. Not to shake hands with him if I can help it.

“ To devote the evenings of next week to mending mamma’s things.

“ To read novels less, and serious books more ; to think less of this bright, beguiling world, and more of a better state.

“ Not to flirt with Sir Felix, as to revenge former slights by rejecting a man, if one has induced him to propose, is far more degrading to the lady than the lover.

“ If I have strength to do all this, may I be spared the bitter fruits of sin, sorrow and shame. May I be happy in my heart’s devotion, though I see not now, or how, or when. May my parents be comfortable, and Tom sent to school ; and may I never again behold that bane of my existence, the bold and vicious Lord Trelawney.”

As he came to this last wish, Lord Trelawney laughed ; but it was a bitter, hollow laugh.

“ You have made him your foe, my dainty moralist,” he muttered, “ who might have been your best friend—the best friend, too, of those

you love so well. And so you adore a cheating, intriguing impostor, who either is, or pretends to be, an Italian—a fellow all moustache and mummery ; a wretched dauber, who slanders the human face divine, and picks John Bull's pocket, with his goggle eyes open. I see not why I should feel any compunction ; I doubt not the scoundrel has one wife already, if not half a dozen, so that the fate I destine for you will be a brighter one than that of being the victim of a mean heartless foreign beggar, who will starve and desert you. Beautiful and simple child ! if you had but loved me—if in this transcript of your silly thoughts and fancies I had seen one glance of preference for me!—what then ? who can tell ?—I might have made a fool of myself ; and now I will persevere, my dainty damsel, till I make one of you. Stop, I will lock this book and picture up. I must read the silly jumble of love and housewifery, and morality, and piety through again. Strange that such folly should interest me—but then it belongs

to this face!" and he gazed on it till he thought it were a pity to dim those eyes and blanch that cheek, and rob that lip of its innocent archness, that smile of its happy purity. Could he, the bold, the lawless, the profligate, really be looking at that face through the softening medium of a human tear? Even so; but then came the thought of her love, her lover—a foreign artist, too! A bitter envy, a fiendlike jealousy, and a derisive wrath swelled his heart, as he said—"He will change all this, if I do not; she is marked to be his victim or mine. Let us see who will conquer; it were better for her to fall into my hands, than into his. *Allons c'est une guerre à la mort.* And now for Black Sambo and Deaf Burke, Lord Neck-or-Nothing and Captain Rook, bruisers and gamblers; they suit me better than sentimental young ladies, sly mammas, and formal papas. With a life blighted, a heart half broken, a fortune half ruined, what have I to do with love, except light love, that Venus smiles on and that Bacchus crowns? Am

I to blame? was this my nature? Oh, Eva De Vere! read how I did love you in the change your falsehood wrought; and yet that wild and boyish passion which coloured a destiny, was not such love as this baby-faced Lucilla might have awakened. You, Eva, drove me to this lawless, reckless life; that was your triumph, and I doubt not your heart beats high with it, beneath the ermined robe of the Duchess: but *you*, Lucilla, you might have won me back to peace and virtue; that would have been a triumph worthy you, you good and lovely one! And yet," he added sadly, as he stood before the toilet glass, "thus defaced, these marks of brutal conflicts on my features, would a timid girl love me? and that too when frightened by the stories of my wild and mad career? No, no! She might have loved me once! Pshaw! dolt—idiot—spooney that I am. She *shall* love me now, or at least she shall seem to. Abel! Abel!"

In an instant, the old valet came so quickly that he must have been very near at hand.

- “ Abel, is his Lordship there still?”
“ No, my Lord, he is gone!”
“ And Captain Rook?”
“ Gone too!”
“ And Sambo, and Burke?”
“ They, too, are gone, my Lord!”
“ How so? did they know I was in?”
“ I think they did, my Lord!”
“ You think! Abel, do not trifle with me;
did you send them away?”
“ I told them you were not very well, my
Lord!”
“ And how did you dare to do so?”
“ I thought your Lordship looked pale and
agitated!”
“ I pale! Ha, ha, ha; let girls and old men
look pale.”
“ They do, my Lord when they see you.”
“ And so they ought. Abel, I am very
angry; I fear they are all offended.”
“ Oh, my Lord!” said Abel, clasping his
withered hands, “ God grant they may be.”

“ Why so ? they are excellent company.”

“ For each other, but not for you. Oh, my Lord ! when I promised my Lady, your mother, to watch over you and never to leave you, I little thought what scenes and people that promise would bring me in contact with.”

“ Well, Abel, you are welcome to go—nay, if you provoke me, I shall give you warning.”

“ It would be vain for you, my Lord, to give me warning to go, when my heart and my conscience warn me to stay. Even if you were to turn me into the street, I should watch ever round your dwelling like a faithful dog, and, like a faithful dog, be one day found dead at your door.”

“ In that case,” said Lord Trelawney, softened, “ I must put up with your impertinence ; but really, Abel, you look ill. Now, if you would go down to Trelawney, you should have Woodbine Cottage, just as it stands, furniture and all, as my late steward had it ;

and you could get things into a little order there."

"Do not tempt me, my Lord; this is my post. It was you, and not your estate, I promised my Lady to stick to; and even Woodbine Cottage would be no place of rest for me—it would be haunted by my Lady's ghost, or, worse still, my own remorse; bad as things are, but for me they would be worse: but for me, you would perhaps have been shot through the heart by a blackleg. Who but me would have defended the plate and deed-chests at the risk of his life? Look at these scars, my Lord," and he showed a deep cut under his silver hair, and several marks of once frightful gashes on his hands; "a modern valet would have escaped these, and yielded up his trust. It is true that I have little peace by day, little sleep at night; that I live in a perpetual fear, lest your dreadful companions should some day bring you home to me on a shutter; but while I am here, you have one by you who

is true to you—one who, owing all to your late honoured parents, will repay the debt, as far as may be, to their only son. Never till I see you married and leading the life Lord Tre-lawney ought to lead, will I leave you. Who nursed you through that dreadful fever? Who found the hired nurses asleep, when your life depended on their care? Who gave the medicines they forgot, and on which, under God, existence hung? No, I will never leave you till the bearers take me out feet foremost, and then I know you will grieve, and that grief may perhaps reclaim you."

"Reclaim me! Abel, you are very bold."

"I am bold. Love and long service make me bold, my Lord, when you, my Lord, bring home such prizes as these—and he pointed to the barber's pole and the wooden Highlander. My late Lord used to capture the enemy's frigates. Blacklegs' and bullies' praise you for this. The King and the Parliament thanked my late Lord for that. If my

late Lord played, it was an honourable game of whist or picquet, with noblemen like himself; he would not sit down with sharpers. His name was an honour to the first of Clubs. He has played at the same¹ table with his Gracious Majesty, ‘George the Good,’ and it was whispered, the Queen herself—old, particular, Queen Charlotte—commented on his perfect breeding and fine play. Oh, had he known that his only son would have frequented hells! He hated bloodshed, but he lived in days when swords were worn, and gentlemen were prone to use them ; he was a master of the noble art, and always punished impertinence, though he skilfully shunned taking life. But would he have risked a life so dear to his King and Country with idle bullies, who shoot at a mark till they can snuff a candle, or extinguish a life? —or with brutal boxers, who sell their blood for hire? He loved one dear and noble lady, the flower of England for beauty and for virtue
—AND HE WAS TRUE TO HER. I knew his

every secret; I was ever by his side ; and I can truly say he was true to her. Oh, my Lord, it is not too late—it is never too late; forget the errors of your youth—tread in his steps, and be indeed his son.”

Lord Trelawney was ever strangely patient with this old man, to whom his parents had been singularly attached, in return for his devotion to them, and to whom he himself had been more than once indebted for his life; but on this occasion the old man’s remarks struck upon a chord which had scarcely ceased to vibrate; he sank in a chair, covered his face with his hands, and listened.

Without removing his hand, he said—“ Go on, Abel, I can bear it.”

Abel was frightened at this gentleness, and feared he had gone too far. “ Oh, my Lord,” he said, “ have I offended ? forgive me ! I have at length spoken out what has long been in my heart; but it ill becomes one like me to censure a nobleman like you.”

"I am not angry, Abel; you are privileged; you are the only person to whose censure I would listen. I love to hear of my parents. I remember them, and love their memory. Had they been spared, perhaps I might have resembled them; but listen, Abel—my father loved my mother in early youth. Was it not so?"

"Oh, yes, he loved her better than his life, before he was twenty; and well he might, for she was almost too beautiful to look upon, and good as she was lovely. I've known him ride fifty miles in snow and sleet to get one glance at her. Riding was all the fashion then, and fifty miles in the depth of winter would try the mettle of horse and rider. I know that, because I rode behind him, and not being in love, I felt it bitter cold and wretched, but he was warm as love could make him. Oh, when there was a talk of my lady's marrying the Marquis of Richlands, my Lord vowed he'd fight him to the death for her, and if he survived, he'd make away with himself; but lor! my lady hated

the Marquis like a Blackamoor, and so she did every man but my master.”

“ She was true to my father ?”

“ True as steel, my Lord.”

“ And they were married ?”

“ Married ! yes, the day he was twenty-one. I fancy I see him now, in his naval uniform, bless him ! and his beautiful brown hair tied behind in a bag, with just a sprinkling of powder, and his laced ruffles and cravat, and a diamond ring Louis the Sixteenth gave him ; and my Lady, her beautiful hair all hanging down in curls to her waist, with a beautiful Brussels lace veil and a diamond bandeau, and her white satin dress, with a long train, and she a-blushing like a rose; nothing ever matched 'em, nor ever will, and so every one said when they opened the ball with a minuet, for they didn't hurry away directly they were joined, my Lord, as if they were ashamed of each other, and wouldn't behave themselves ; they were proud of each other, and of what they'd done,

as they well might be ; and before a year my Lady presented my Lord with a fine boy—a son and heir—yourself, my Lord.”

“ A fine present, truly,” said Lord Trelawney, bitterly ; “ had my mother jilted my father, would that, think you, have broken his heart ? ”

“ Yes, my Lord, or made him desperate ; he told me when ’twas said she’d marry the Marquis, he felt as if his brain was on fire, and all his blood seemed turned to gall.”

“ Abel, as he would have been, had my mother deceived him, I *am*. I loved as he did, but I did not love an angel like my mother ; I loved a false, base woman, who jilted me for a loftier title, and a larger fortune ; my blood is turned to gall, and now I have told you the secret of my life ; now blame, or pity me, as you will.”

“ Oh ! my lord, pity ! my heart bleeds for you ; but you are young—you may love again.”

“ I may ? I do ! but am not loved again, and swear to avenge on her I loved, and all her

sex, the perjury that has blighted my life and blasted my soul to me. Folly! weakness, old Abel! you would make me a girl, an idiot, a driveller like yourself. Order my cab! come, I must seek pleasure, to atone for lost peace."

" Oh! do not go out in this mood, my Lord!"

" Do you disobey me?"

" No, no; I will go and order the cab. Oh, my! Oh, my!"

" Go! why the devil don't you go, then? So—well—now I will go and see if I can catch another glimpse of thee, thou hated, loved, Lucilla; yes, by every fiend in hell, I swear thou shalt be mine; if flattery cannot beguile, nor wealth dazzle thee; if love cannot win, nor fear subdue thee, force and fraud shall bring thee to my arms; you shall be mine, if I purchase you with my life. *Allons! vive la bagatelle!* that is to say—*vive l'amour! vive la femme!* now for a careful toilette: women are so caught by show. Why, Byron when he tried *incog.* to

win a country girl, found no success in a shabby coat ; and only began to win a smile, when he appeared in a good one. She hates my sporting coats, and coloured chokers. Abel ! I want a hot bath."

" Yes, my Lord. It has long been ready."

" Stultz's last new frock coat and waistcoat ; Gobby's trousers, and a pair of Paris boots ; my new hat, and a pair of kid gloves ; now come and shave me ! How your hand trembles ; pshaw ! give me the razor. What, if I rid you of so bad a master ?" and he drew the knife across his throat, as if in earnest.

The old man turned deadly pale, and caught his arm.

" Confound it ! what a gripe ! why I was only joking ; there—" and he darted at old Abel, brandishing the razor ; " shall I put an end to thy miserable life, old man ?"

" It were a mercy," said Abel, without flinching.

" To many—for I should be hanged. Quick !

now for my bath ; be here to dress me on my return. Where's my dressing-gown ? so—”

And then in a fine voice he began to sing :—

“ When he who adores thee has left but the name
 Of his faults and his follies behind,
Oh ! say, wilt thou sigh, should they darken the fame
 Of a life that for thee was resigned ?

“ Yes, weep ! and however my foes may condemn,
 My tears shall efface their decree ;
For Heaven can witness, though guilty to them,
 I have been but too faithful to thee ! ”

Thus gaily and loudly singing, he went to the bath.

“ Poor boy ! poor boy ! ” said the old valet, busying himself getting the things ready, “ and to think there's a broken heart at the bottom of all this, and a woman the cause that the last Baron Trelawney is a disgrace to the name. Except my noble mistress, I always hated women, and there never was any love lost between us. They're just like snakes—shining, and twining and venomous. Well, there's no *she* living, can say I ever listened to her beguilements. And now my Lord's going out in this reckless, des-

perate mood, to drink and gamble ; and, may be, to fight and do worse. And a woman at the bottom of it all ! ”

While thus soliloquizing, Lord Trelawney returned, singing—

“ *C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour.*”

and,

“ Ce que je disire et que j'aime,
C'est toujours toi !
Pour mon ame le bien suprême,
C'est amore toi.”

He seemed as if he had never known a pang or a care ; and when his elegant and fashionable toilet was complete, he looked a finished gentleman, and, but for his blemished nose, and broken teeth, it would have puzzled St. James's to produce so fine and noble-looking a fellow.

“ Good-by, Abel ! Don't expect me till you see me ! and go to the play, or the meeting-house, or do something to cheer up your old heart ! I'm off ! ”

Abel watched him till even his tiger was no longer visible, and then he wiped his eyes, but

with a sudden recollection, hurried down stairs, saying to himself—" I do believe the wine's out, and the key in the cellarette. I must leave off fretting, or I sha'n't be worth salt to my porridge. Ah! just so ; the decanter's emptied, and a bottle of *Curaçoa* gone bodily off! Safe bind, safe find! It's as much my duty to take care of you, as it is my Lord's to take care of his estate. Yet, I am ready enough to blame him. Oh, my! oh, my! how my old heart does ache! and though I'm as weak as a cat, I can't eat a mouthful. I'll go and lie down on my bed—but first, I'll pray for him. It's never too late with God. Poor boy, poor dear boy ! Oh, I'm very faint, but I'll go and lock the dressing-case and drawers ; there's no safety for property in an hotel. And to think *we've* a house in St. James's Square ready to receive us. I'll step there, to see things are looked to. A breath of air will do me good, and the full-lengths of my dear Lord and Lady do always quiet my poor toiling, restless spirit. Oh, my ! oh, my ! I'm

not quite easy in my mind about Mrs. Comfit. She's old now, and hard of hearing, and of seeing too, and her married daughters go there, and take their children. How can I tell but what the furniture may be injured, so that if it please God my young Lord should marry, and lead a new life, it will cost sums to repair and replace? but I never go there but I see children playing about, and it's against my orders. Mrs. Comfit's an old servant, but she's only a woman; and there's no trusting a woman, always barring my late and blessed Lady—and she was more of an angel than a woman. I'll step into the house by the area-steps, and then I shall see how things are really going on. Ah! I fear I'm too like 'Martha,' in the blessed Scripture, 'troubled about a many things.' What with the family-plate, and the family-pictures, and the family-linen, my Lady's jewels, and the sets of chaney, and my young Lord, all put under my care on *her* death-bed, it's almost enough to turn my old head. Well, there ain't not a salt-spoon

missing, nor a tea-cup cracked, nor a table-napkin soiled; and, oh, fine work I've had to keep my Ladyship's jewels—hers that she wore on her good, noble bosom and brow—from being given to them, so bad she never could have a notion, sweet soul! that there could be such serpents in her dear form. Oh, dear! oh, dear! I've done well by all—the old coach-horses, and my lady's pony, and her lap-dog; and all, except my Lord, and over him I've little control. Well, if he were but married, and had a lady to see to him, and take care of him, I'd be thankful to lay down my burden and give up the keys—for it's almost more than I can bear. But I'll get home, and look the plate and linen over."

END OF VOLUME SECOND.

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